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RECKONING WITH YOUTH

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RECKONING WITH YOUTH

A Practical Handbook for Youth Leaders
and all who have
the interest of youth at heart
and are striving for and with it

by

ANNE ARMSON
M.A.(Oxon)

and

STANLEY TURNBULL
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Area Youth Organisers
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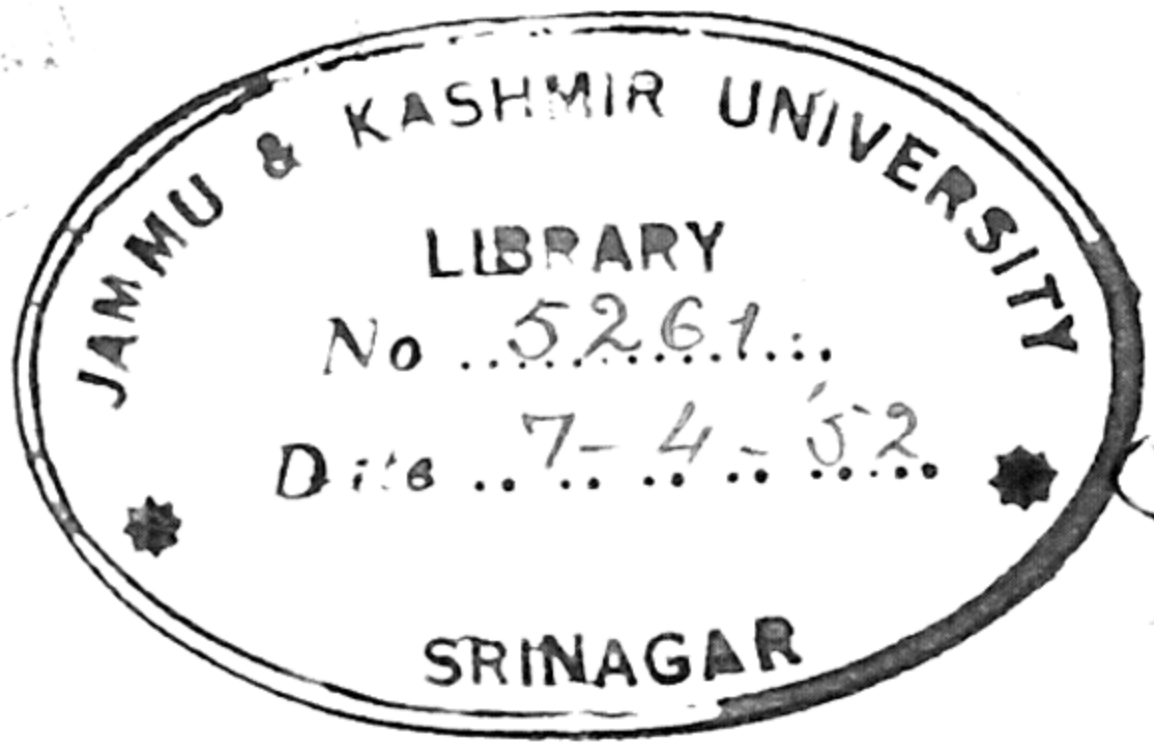

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FOREWORD

In offering this book to the large category of hard-working youth Leaders, both voluntary and otherwise, one thought was in the authors' minds ; that the book should be practical. We feel that it is. Nothing outlined in the following pages has not been tried out and tested in all manner of club organisations, so that its practicability has been experienced by the writers. Everything contained in this book is the outcome of experience—experience gained in every possible type of club, and under most adverse conditions. Such experience gained has been derived from such various localities as Oxford, Dundee, Birmingham, London, and the County of Staffordshire. To all those organisations in these areas which have, in some measure, offered scope to the authors in their respective spheres, our grateful thanks are hereby tendered. Without the helpful association with Club Leaders, club members and others in these places, the essential experience could not have been obtained, and the book could never have been written. In conclusion, the authors would like also to express their appreciation of the kindly assistance of Mr. James A. Heath, for his collaboration in one chapter, and his criticism of many others.

Anne Armson.
Stanley Turnbull.

To

R. WILFRID STEVENTON

Secretary to the Staffordshire County Youth Committee

In Gratitude

A practical Handbook for Youth Leaders and all who have the interest of Youth at heart and are striving for and with it.

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CHAPTER I

WHY START A CLUB?

THE idea of Youth Clubs is not a new one. Gregariousness is a characteristic as old as mankind itself; indeed, if men had not had in them the urge to "get together," civilisation would have been impossible, and the life of man would certainly have remained "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

In the lads and lasses round the mediæval maypole, in the bands of Elizabethan apprentices with their wild games, in the industrialised boys and girls of the nineteenth century, who congregated round the lamp-posts in their grim and sordid streets, and in the members of a modern Youth Club, we see manifestations of the same instinct.

But the modern club, though an outcome of the same desire to "get together," is far more than a mere fortuitous gathering. It has two distinct characteristics—continuity and purpose; and so far as that purpose is accepted consciously by the members—or, as is more frequently the case, unconsciously—so the gathering becomes a club in the highest sense of the term.

The Leadership of a Youth Club, whether it be undertaken in a voluntary or a paid capacity, as circumstances may dictate, is social work of the highest possible type. The influence of a group assembled round a man or woman of character is unpredictable in its possiblities. In the nineteenth century the Danes Grundtvig and Kold, through the small groups of young people which ultimately became the Folk High School Movement, awoke a whole nation from spiritual, mental, and economic sloth, so that in less than fifty years Denmark, from being one of the most backward of European countries, had

begun to lead the world in economic methods of dairy farming and land utilisation, and in social experiment. On the other hand, the German Hitler, perceiving the infinite possibilities in youth, corrupted and perverted it in the schoolroom, and exploited its vitality and enthusiasm for waging war in the interests of the State which they had been taught to regard as their God.

Club leadership, however, like most fruitful experiences, is not easy. Like teaching, such leadership is undeniably a gift; however, like teaching, it can be learnt as a craft, given a desire to profit from experience and an open, humble, and enquiring mind. Would-be leaders of youth often fall into two types—those who imagine that it is enough to feel a vague yearning to " do good " to young people, and those who see the need for leadership, and would like to help, but are paralysed by the fear that the task will prove beyond their capacities. In short, the " goodwill school " underestimate the difficulties, and soon retire defeated, while the fearful, because they exaggerate the difficulties, never begin at all. Actually the truth lies about half-way between the two conceptions. Club leadership is difficult, but not too difficult to be learned.

Youth is not tactful, and the inexperienced leader may sometimes lose heart when he is compared unfavourably, and with disconcerting frankness, with his predecessor. Let him not give up, however, but rather present a bland and impassive countenance to his critics. He can be absolutely certain that when *his* time comes to depart he will be held up to his successor as the very model of Club Leaders, and the boy who gave the most trouble in the club will in all probability be his mosr persistent correspondent. Loyalty is one of the endearing characteristics of young people, and the leader who earns it can rely on its lasting qualities, even when it means the discomfiture of anyone who takes his place.

Obviously, the more popular the former leader the more difficult the path of his successor. Nevertheless, young people, despite their partisanship, are also fair. Imperturbability,

kindly firmness, and unfailing humour will eventually win their respect and loyalty. As in many other callings, the first three months of club leadership are the worst, and the leader who determines to see them through without flinching will find that he has little else to fear.

Any group of young persons assembled at a street corner or elsewhere may be conscious that it has a purpose. Only too often the purpose is ephemeral, worthless, and indeed harmful —or at all events, may easily become so. A thoughtful adult may experience the urge to form a group or club with a purpose that shall be progressive in its nature.

Here we have a motive, praiseworthy enough, but which, unfortunately, does not always meet with success. The street group usually exists for its own adolescent purpose; to exchange that purpose for an adult objective is to invite disaster.

The right approach would be to accept the existing purpose of the street-corner group, no matter how casual it may be, and to let that be the objective of the club—at least for the present. But the casual purpose of the street-corner group may be definitely harmful; if so, an adult is not likely to make much progress in his approach to its members. He may prefer to avoid the purpose altogether, a policy which may well result in tragic failure, but in this case he must try to foster interest in some other activity no matter how trivial.

Gambling, drinking, girl chasing or boy hunting, are motives around which—in modified forms, of course—a Club might have to be built. Competitive games, with definite prizes for the winners, may provide a perfectly healthy stimulus. The group or club canteen, set up in a comfortable room which is used only by the members, adds a glamour to the "soft drinks" and wholesome beverages obtainable there which will rival the meretricous excitement of surreptitous drinking in public bars. Let boys and girls meet in well-lighted, homely premises, divert their minds until they forget the doubts and suspicions which they felt you had of them, and which you probably still have, but *must not* show, and the

" girl chasing " and " boy hunting " will become more natural and less emotional. Gradually—and it may be very gradually indeed—self-control will become manifest, and even those whose behaviour is most irrational will tend to accept the patient and uncondemning leadership of the person who has so far helped and understood them, without asking too much of them.

When leadership is natural and unpretentious the example of its own standard is its greatest power. The adult who is aware of the need for Youth Clubs, and feels the insistent urge to organise one, is undertaking an exacting task, but one which will more than repay the efforts demanded for its inception and continuance. To start a few adolescents on paths which are new to them, and which make for a more satisfactory expression of body, mind, and soul, is no mean achievement, and one whose reward cannot be assessed as in the case of any other kind of work. It is a task that is constantly expanding and developing, according to the varied characters of the members who come under the influence of the Leader and of the Club. No one who undertakes the work of club organisation will complain of tedium, nor, strangely enough, will he expect any acknowledgement of his efforts ; that somewhere he will be content to know perhaps in the heart of the most difficult member of the club, there is a glimmering of a new life, an unspoken acceptance of a new friendship, whose inspirational power cannot be expressed in adolescent idiom.

The need being obvious, the Club might be formed as a completely separate unit associated with an existing organisation, such as a Sunday School, the Old Scholars' Association of a school, a Church, or a branch of the Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, or Boys' Brigade, though usually a new and independent little community is the better solution. A member of a Rotary Club might start a club under the wing of the Rotarians; a meeting place ought easily to be found by the members of such a body, and while one man's job would be to lead, other Rotarians could help in organisation. But any one with the necessary

urge towards public service might invite a small group of adolescents to his or her home for friendly talks, games, etc., and thus pave the way for the permanent establishment of a Youth Club.

This does not mean that you need throw your house open to all and sundry. Make use of a room that is comfortable without being cluttered up with personal belongings. Let it be brightly lighted, and hung with reasonably good pictures, and let there be some vases of flowers. In short, let it be a cheerful room, not a depressing one, like so many seldom-used rooms.

This will serve for a beginning; and first impressions are usually lasting. Arrange for light refreshments during the meeting and try, unobstrusively, to have a friendly chat with each of the members during the evening. From the very first you should try to give each member an impression of impartial friendliness, so that succeeding meetings will be awaited with increasing interest.

Leadership will inevitably devolve upon the person who inaugurates the club. Eagerness to establish a club usually betokens the qualities of leadership; though there are, of course, different types of leadership, according to the varying standards of Clubs. But in the beginning at all events, the enthusiastic and far-seeing promoter should be prepared to act as Leader. His personal views may be modified considerably as the craft sets out on its voyage of adventure; snags and undercurrents (though, let us hope, no storms) will all have tended to teach him self-effacement. He will look through the eyes of the voyagers, but will see with the vision of a captain; difficulties must be turned into opportunities for proving the vessel's seawothiness, and its crew's ability to navigate toward lands of greater opportunities. A captain who can get his vessel and crew safely through the hidden reefs to the calm waters of success is unlikely to be discarded.

Once the club is launched the members themselves will advertise it, if it is worth advertising. Names and addresses of scholars who have recently left the school will often be supplied

by a sympathetic head teacher of a school in the locality. The Juvenile Employment Officer may sometimes help with likely names, if the right approach is made. Women's guilds and institutes can help you, and a note to the secretary, advising her of the opening of the new club, will interest mothers with sons and daughters of club age.

A circular note, such as the following, sent to probable members, may be the best approach, particularly in a small village where the total " clubable " population may not exceed twenty or thirty.

TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF X—

It is proposed to open a Club for the young people of X— between the ages of 14 and 18. A meeting to discuss this proposal will be held in the School on Tuesday, 14th September, at 7-30. It is hoped that you will be able to attend.

A.....B.....,
Convener,
10, High Street, X—.

At the opening meeting it is probable that those who are brave enough to come will be shy and non-vocal. Experience has proved that in this condition young people prefer to be left alone, beyond a cheery greeting as they arrive. If possible arrange for someone, probably a Youth Organiser, to give a short talk on Youth Clubs, and if the speaker can outline his talk with a little humour, so much the better. Laughter is a great ice-breaker. Tell the young people what is proposed in the way of programme. Tell them they will be expected to form a committee, which will help to run the club, so that it will be their concern. Ask for questions, which in all probability will not be forthcoming, though it is helpful if they are, and discuss the best time to hold the club. On the whole it is best to avoid early-closing day as members who work in shops usually do their shopping in neighbouring towns on that day, finishing with a visit to the cinema.

It is sometimes a good plan to follow this meeting by a

social at which, if possible, cups of tea and biscuits are served, the evening ending with an invitation to those who would like to join to come on the night chosen for the first club evening.

The club is now almost launched, but two factors will contribute to its success—sufficiency of good helpers and a live Members' Committee.

No Club Leader can run any but a very small club well without help. An assistant leader is invaluable, both to take charge if the club leader is unavoidably away and to supervise other rooms if the club has more than one main room. In any case he will be needed to supervise other activities because few clubs are engaged in only one activity at once. Assistant Club Leadership is, of course, very good training for complete responsibility as a Club Leader. Tact is perhaps his main asset. He must, naturally, be absolutely loyal to the Club Leader, referring matters of discipline, if any, to him and supporting his authority on every occasion. It is unforgivable in an assistant leader to form as sometimes happens, a small coterie within the club. It is the easiest thing in the world to do this, because even the most perfect clubs harbour a few discontented spirits who are never happy unless they are "agin the government" and a disloyal assistant club helper becomes the natural focal point.

Club helpers are easier to find when the club has been in existence for some time. Usually they are senior members who correspond to the prefects in a school. They have learnt the value of the club spirit, and they can be trusted with such duties as the supervision of the canteen, the collection of subscriptions, the issue of library books, and the care of equipment.

The Members' Committee, unless much attention is given to it, may be a great disappointment. The inexperienced might anticipate keen competition amongst the members to serve on it, and might suppose that the main function of the Club Leader would be, firmly, but always very tactfully, to put a damper on the many ambitious schemes of the Committee members. In

practice it often happens that the creation of a good Committee, with a sense of responsibility, is a very slow process. The average club member much prefers to have a programme arranged for him, rather than to arrange it himself. This reluctance may be due to physical causes, such as fatigue after the long day's work which, unfortunately, is the lot of so many young people. Nevertheless, the good club leader, though he may feel that it would be infinitely simpler to do the job himself, will resist the temptation.

The best way of establishing a well-run Members' Committee is to treat it as a serious matter, as indeed it is. It is democracy in embryo, and if it be the aim of clubs to produce good citizens then a sound training in the practices of democracy should be a prominent feature of club life. It is by no means fanciful to imagine that owing to the love of Committee work inspired by a well-run Club Committee one or more of the members may in later years seek a wider sphere of service on the parish or town council.

The Committee should be summoned regularly, probably once a month at first, and each member should have a properly drafted notice and agenda. The Club Leader normally acts as chairman, but the offices of Secretary and Junior Treasurer should be held by club members duly appointed from the Committee. The Senior Treasurer, who holds the main club funds, is usually an adult member of the Advisory Committee. The Junior Treasurer reports on financial matters, on information received from the Senior Treasurer. Minutes of the meetings should always be kept, and read by the Secretary.

The next step is the formation of an Advisory Committee, a step which can be omitted if this be thought desirable. An Advisory Committee consists of a few local people, six or eight in number, with a real interest in youth, and their function is, not to interfere in the running of the club, but to give it moral backing. The Committee meets occasionally, perhaps twice a year, when its chief business is to receive a report on the club's progress from the Club Leader, and to discuss, and give advice.

on any matter that may be brought forward : such, for instance, as the desirability of purchasing some expensive item, like a radiogram, or of appointing a new club helper. The actual work done by an Advisory Committee is small, but in so far as its individual members take an interest in the club, the Club Leader feels that he is not entirely alone in bearing the burden of adult responsibility.

If the Advisory Committee is formed just before the opening of the club, some of the members at least should be present at the inaugural meeting, to lend support to the Club Leader, and to give a certain importance to the proceedings, which the potential club members will appreciate. The presence, too, of the Youth Organiser for the district may be helpful, and he or she will usually be more than willing to give a short talk to the boys and girls present on the purpose of the club, and the privileges and duties involved in membership.

CHAPTER TWO

TYPES OF CLUBS

It is part of their attraction that no two clubs are alike. There is a great difference between Urban and Rural Clubs, and these in their turn may be divided into the obvious categories of Boys', Girls', Twin and Mixed Clubs.

As one would expect, one great difference between urban and rural clubs lies in their size. In the town, obviously, the potential if not always the actual membership is larger than in the country. A rural club may, and often does, number every adolescent in the village on its roll, and may still have a membership of under twenty. The club in a town area, perhaps in a poor district, or on a large housing estate, may be full to

overflowing, yet the Leader may feel that he has barely touched the fringe of the problem of youth and its leisure.

On the whole, the task of running a club is rather more difficult in a town. The business of recruiting members is more chancy, and the rival attractions of cinema and dance hall are much more in evidence. "I go to a dance three or four times a week," remarked a fifteen-year-old member of a Youth Centre on a suburban London estate: "though," she hastened to add, "I always come in and tell Miss X (the Club Leader) first. She doesn't mind. She's a sport."

This observation not only propounds the problem, but indirectly suggests the solution. There is nothing inherently wrong or surprising in the fact that boys and girls in their teens prefer the light and warmth and glitter of an attractively decorated dance hall, and the music of a well-paid dance band to the drabness (let us be candid) of the average club premises, which are more often than not in urgent need of repainting and redecorating, and to the tinny jangle of the club piano, however fervently it is thumped. The work at which the majority of young people spend four-fifths of their working hours, the streets through which they pass on their way to their work, and the homes in which they eat and sleep, can hardly be said to satisfy the adolescent's need for colour and romance. Hence the lure of the dance hall and the cinema.

What, then, is the function of the club? Assuredly it is not that of trying to outstrip its competitors on their own ground, though their success may emphasise the necessity of making the club as attractive as a few tins of paint, a dozen yards of cretonne, and as many easy chairs as possible will allow. Just as in rivalry in love the plain Jane may win in the end, because she makes the most of her more domestic virtues, so the club may come to mean more in the lives of its members than the more flashy cinema and dance hall; because it is a place which offers stability and friendship, and because each individual is made to feel that he or she matters. The cinema and dance hall will still attract the young—and, after all, why not? When

Bing Crosby is on at the " Odeon " the " Keep Fit " class may lack a few members ; but if the truants have thought fit to call in and tell the Club Leader where they are going, it is obvious that the club and its Leader are beginning to count in their lives. The Rural Club has to be much more self-contained than the town club. To be sure, it is rarely confronted with the rival attractions of the cinema and the dance hall ; but, on the other hand, attendance on the lighter evenings is often hindered by the claims of hay-making or harvesting, and it may even be advisable to close the club during these busy farming periods.

Very often the village club begins as an " Old Scholars' Association," built round the personality of the village head-master or mistress. Where this happens a good club usually results, because the bond between leader and member, and member and member, already exists. It is a continuation of the greater family group of the school, and makes for the real enrichment of community life in the village. Moreover, the Leader, because of the very nature of his profession, is generally able to suggest and initiate a considerable variety of activities.

Where, however, the club has come into being independently of the school, perhaps because the headmaster lacks interest, or because he lives away from the village, or has other ties, the great problem is to provide a varied programme, for specialiscd talent, such as the ability to teach handicrafts, or take " Keep Fit " classes, is difficult to find. It may be that the idea of physical training will have to be abandoned, but as country dwellers, unlike their brothers and sisters in the towns, are rarely in need of exercise, this is no very serious matter.

Handicrafts are often popular in the village club, and in this connection it may be helpful to make contact with the Women's Institute, if one exists, as one or two of the members may, with a little persuasion, be induced to teach some of the crafts they have learnt there. Incidentally, this close association between the various groups and organisations, whether for adults or

for young people, is an aim which might well be pursued in village life, making as it does for a development of the sense of community, and of mutual responsibility.

Dramatic performances, music, either choral or instrumental, the compilation of a village history by a small group of enthusiasts, occasional talks on some aspects of village life, such as farming, or the church, and listening groups, are among the activities which may appeal to the members of village clubs. Local talent, even of an unusual kind, may be called upon to introduce greater variety. For instance, the enthusiastic bell-ringer of an older generation may be induced to teach his craft on the hand-bells.

A rural club offers unlimited possibilities to the enthusiastic Leader who is fertile in ideas, and is alive to the opportunities for developing a sense of community in the young people in his charge. His taste and enthusiasms in literature, his ideals, his outlook, his philosophy of life, his attitude to the problems of the times, will all mould, in some measure, the minds and thoughts of the members. It is a great, an almost alarming responsibility, but it is also a wonderful privilege.

Boys', Girls', Twin or Mixed Clubs? The would-be Club Leader, meditating on a club as yet unborn, must decide the question problem for himself, unless circumstances have already decided it. The provision of suitable premises, the enrolment of leaders and helpers, the exploitation of such facilities as may exist in the neighbourhood, are all matters for immediate consideration. It may be that someone is already running a girls' club in the next street, and would greatly welcome any assistance in making her club larger and better, in which case the obvious course is to help her, rather than to establish a rival organisation—which, since young people resemble the Athenians in their love of some new thing, will probably do no more than draw members from one to the other, until the new club proves to be no more exciting than the old, when they may reverse the process.

The question as to whether clubs should be mixed or separate

has already become a hardy annual at conferences of Youth Leaders, and will in all probability never be finally settled; however, broadly speaking, some general rules for the guidance of new leaders may be laid down.

In the age-group 14–16 separate clubs are better—certainly in the case of boys, who do not want to mix with girls at this age, and are impatient of their presence. The girls in the corresponding age-group, however, are usually very anxious for the companionship of boys, but of boys who are slightly older than themselves. Their growing interest often leads them to follow the boys around, watching them exhibit their prowess in their various activities, rather than joining in these activities on equal terms. Such a situation is obviously good neither for the boys nor for the girls, and the younger girls, like the younger boys, are better in their separate clubs, where they can work off their surplus energy in purposeful activities.

The older age-groups obviously need one another's companionship, and in the healthy atmosphere of the club friendships may be built up on a firmer foundation than a chance "pick-up" in the street. Nevertheless, this is not altogether an argument for the Mixed Club in the true sense of the term, which implies that the boys and girls are mingled in every activity. Naturally boys and girls cannot engage in every form of activity together; for example, in physical training, dressmaking, certain handicrafts, and aeroplane model-making, which immediately suggest themselves as obvious exceptions. Mixed clubs accordingly are usually faced with two alternatives; either they must accept a much more limited range of activities, or they must resolve themselves into what really amounts to twin clubs, which means that they will be separate for some activities and come together for others—such as dramatic performances, discussions, country dancing, and ballroom dancing. Whether the boys and girls meet on separate nights, coming together on a third night, or whether they practise their separate activities in different parts of the building on the same night, amalgamating for the second part of the even-

ing for joint activities, depends very much on the extent of the premises and the existence of adequate leadership. If possible, of course, two persons, one of either sex, should act as joint leaders of a twin or mixed club.

Although twin clubs are perhaps the ideal type, it must be admitted that many excellent examples of mixed clubs are to be found, particularly in villages, or as church or chapel organisations. The success of these clubs is probably due to the fact that the members are already well acquainted before they join the club. They have been familiar with one another from early childhood, and have grown up together without any false glamour, and even if Mary Smith and Tommy Jones learn to see each other with new eyes as they grow older, they still retain the memory of the little boy with the grubby face, or the little girl with the handkerchief pinned to her frock, who sat in the same row at school, or took part in the chapel concerts. Moreover, church or chapel clubs tend on the whole to attract the rather more intelligent and older types of boys and girls, who prefer such activities as dramatic performances, concerts, discussions, debates and talks, all of which are activities that flourish best in mixed groups.

One great advantage, of course, of the mixed and twin clubs is the fact that the boys and girls meet together in committee on terms of equality ; and the more committees, within reason, the better, as more members will be drawn in.

In modern life there is an increasing and highly desirable tendency for women to take their place by the side of men in council, not necessarily only in order to express the woman's point of view, but simply to add their quota of wisdom as individuals and responsible citizens. Club committees constitute an excellent preparation for this natural co-operation between the sexes in building sanely for the future.

CHAPTER III

PREMISES

As the number of members which can be accommodated by a club will generally be determined by the size of the premises available, one must consider whether small premises and a somewhat restricted membership are desirable, having due regard for the value and scope of the club's ultimate influence over its members. As most of the suggestions put forward in this book assume that a beginning will have to be made with limited resources, it may be concluded that we acknowledge the real value of a small club ; though it must not be imagined that a small club must necessarily have small premises. Without labouring the point, we will assume that suitable premises may be difficult to obtain, but that whatever is offered will be utilised to the fullest possible extent, according to the ingenuity of the members and the leader.

Although for a beginning a club may meet in one room, ampler accommodation will inevitably become necessary. Two rooms are perhaps the minimum in which the smallest club can be expected to develop. One larger room will serve for general games of the noisier type, and perhaps, for combined P.T. ; also for billiards, table tennis, badminton, and the like. This room could be used for cinema shows, concerts, and special social evenings, and for this purpose a small platform should be built in sections, easily assembled for use as occasion demands, and as easily packed away again. With ingenuity such sections of staging (since the stage need not be very high in small premises) might be fashioned so that they form part of the furniture of the room, serving as trestles to support the table-tennis boards, small billiard tables, and the like. They might even be planned for use as storage cupboards for games and P.T. gear.

In dealing with this room, let us make sure that the lights

are high enough in the ceiling to allow of ball games. Have electric points available for the use of portable footlights and general stage lighting, and also have another point at the opposite end of the room. This will be useful as a source of electric supply in the event of your arranging a cinema show. Switches for each of these points and the ceiling lights should be wired independently of each other.

Having decided upon the uses to which the larger room or hall will be put, the next consideration is the number of rooms available apart from this main assembly room. Two small rooms may be devoted to subordinate activities, one to be quite definitely the " Quiet " room, where the quieter pursuits can be indulged in. Part of this might house the club library, and shelves should be provided for this purpose. The storage of books in boxes is a makeshift not to be recommended, for it does not encourage reading. Well-arranged book shelves will lead members to examine the books and perhaps to try an author previously unknown.

The chairs in this room should be comfortable enough to allow of real relaxation, and the lighting should be bright without glare. There must be a table or so for the use of members who want to write or draw, but above all it should be emphasised that the quiet room should deserve its name. Good pictures on the walls, and perhaps a bust or two of famous authors, help to give the room an appropriate and harmonious atmosphere. This room might contain a radio and a gramophone, and on special evenings it could be utilised for small listening groups and the debating society.

The second room might be a general games-cum-craft room for games of the table variety. A small bench and a kit of tools in one corner will attract those members who want to make things. This room might be more or less the common room of the club, and for this reason it should not be next door to the quiet room. It will need two cupboards, one for games equipment and the other for craft materials and tools. Two separate cupboards are far better than one large cupboard

partitioned off to hold the two kinds of material. The games cupboard should be under one committee-man's control and the craft cupboard under either the instructor's jurisdiction, or that of a committee-man who is really interested in the subject, not merely pretending to be interested.

In this room the furniture should be strongly made, and designed for use rather than relaxation. The craft section should have a broom and a bin to hold shavings or other waste from each evening's craft session.

Do not overlook the matter of lavatory accommodation, which is better outside the main building if possible. Provided it is adequate it need not be lavish ; the one thing essential is absolute cleanliness. Everything that is club property or provided for club use should have a hall-mark of cleanliness that no member would wish to smirch. But in regard to washing facilities, these must not be difficult of access ; it is of little use to encourage cleanliness if the simple aids are lacking. The absence of a proper shower-bath should encourage resourceful members to make their own, for this amenity is well worth any effort made for its installation.

A cloak-room is difficult to allow for in a small floor-space, but something of the kind is necessary ; at the very least you should have a plentiful supply of coat-pegs, fixed not too close together. This coat-rack should be not too near the main door, where it might tempt a light-fingered intruder.

The Leader should have an office, but if the premises are no larger than those described he may have to manage with a small area partitioned off from the library or quiet room. However small it may have to be, in view of the limited accommodation, the Leader should insist on this as a sheer necessity. It will be space well employed, and ungrudged by the members, for they, as well as the Leader himself, will feel that the club is lacking something if their "Chief" does not possess his own little den. Privacy for the Leader is indeed essential to the organisation and running of the club. Members, whether new or otherwise, may feel the need of a private interview with the Leader;

so may visitors to the club; private papers and other possessions must be safely stored, and on some occasions the Leader will need to retreat to his den as a harbour of refuge in a tumult of youthful activity.

So much for the bare necessities of room space. Heating must be considered with regard to local facilities and prices. Coal fires are comfortable, but need constant attention, and may be extravagant. Central heating is excellent if you have a stoker who understands his job. Electric radiators or gas fires are sometimes very expensive for a club, so that the best expedient is often the gas-heated radiator. If the building has once been warmed through the radiators can be turned off for the last hour without seriously affecting the temperature. No doubt after the war new devices will make their appearance which will help to solve many heating problems. Meanwhile, you should make the best use of whatever is available, and get all the information and help that you can from the local public services dealing with heating and lighting.

Flooring is important, and the first essential is that it must be strong. Wood blocks sometimes kick up out of place, while ordinary concrete gives off an unpleasant dust. There are cement compounds now available, which contain a proportion of sawdust; these prevent the formation of dust. Floors of wood blocks or ordinary floor-boards, stained and beeswaxed, wear well and are easily cleaned though their surface is apt to be slippery.

Some Leaders may prefer plain wooden floors, which can be scrubbed and cleaned without waxing; others prefer thick linoleum, which certainly wears well and deadens sound. Coconut matting wears well, but allows a great deal of dust to filter through on to the floor-boards beneath it.

Colour-schemes in a club are far more important than many people seem to think. Colour plays on the emotions as does music, and a club should be bright and cheerful if its atmosphere is to be felt by all who enter. While the walls and ceilings might be distempered in pale shades of yellow, pink,

green, etc., this cheerful note should not be nullified by choosing dull, dark, flat paints for doors and dados. Some charming effects can be obtained by graining in bright green and orange colours, not the stereotyped oak and mahogany shades reminiscent of the Victorians.

All this work might easily be undertaken by a team of enthusiastic club members; and club premises painted and decorated by the members themselves are more likely to be appreciated by members, and kept clean and orderly, than if the professional painter and decorator is employed.

Windows should be adeqaute for both lighting and ventilation. The latter is an important item, which is frequently overlooked. Often enough, when ventilation is called for at a social meeting, the only result of opening the windows is to produce intolerable draughts. The curtaining of the windows will probably be left to the girls, though in these days of black-out, impenetrability cannot always be combined with beauty. In a youth club light and fresh air are perhaps more essential than attractive curtains.

A canteen cupboard and counter might be set up and dismantled as needed, and you must not forget that such amenities add to the attractiveness and cheerfulness of a club. Many youngsters look forward to canteen time, and get a great deal of enjoyment out of the social stimulus of light refreshments. Also, in some areas, the canteen could arrange to supply members with more satisfactory food than is obtainable in their own homes. Such a canteen might be made to do more than pay its way. Even in times of war rationing, adequate supplies are granted to youth organisations, for the Government recognises the physical needs of growing adolescents. While restrictions may vary, periodically, according to the progress of the war, no specific ruling on this matter can be cited here, but application to the local Food Office will bring all the information you need; failing that, ask the local Youth Committee, through the Education Offices, to help you. Beginning perhaps with a modest gas-ring and urn, your

canteen may soon become a popular and most useful feature of your club.

Whether or not the club can afford a caretaker is a personal problem. In the beginning, at all events, a rota of club members might be prevailed upon to clean and look after the club rooms. Indeed, by way of training them in co-operation, they should be encouraged to do this until the club is large enough to afford a paid caretaker who is more likely to be respected if club members have undertaken themselves his (or her) task. In searching for premises for a club one must consider whether the sole use of the premises is possible, or whether a part tenancy is offered, as in the case of schools and church halls, where the furniture such as classroom desks, etc., cannot be moved. Where no cupboards are available it will be difficult to store the club equipment. After all, one of the foremost virtues of a club is its permanency, and if the membership is large enough, a permanent home in unfurnished rooms, which the members can themselves help to furnish and adapt, is greatly to be desired. Regular meetings in a small schoolroom or church hall for the purpose of P.T. classes or occasional " socials " can be a very valuable adjunct to a club programme, if the club has always to meet in such premises, in place of a permanent home, it will be seriously handicapped. The ideal solution is to acquire the lease of a large, vacant dwellinghouse. Such houses as cannot easily find tenants often have spacious rooms and grounds, which can readily be adapted to the needs of the club. The house may perhaps be so old-fashioned as to present a forlorn and forbidding appearance, and rusty fireplaces, old gas-fittings and rotten floors may make it appear a hopeless proposition. But a Leader with vision and initiative would recognise in such a derelict house the very opportunities that would appeal to youth.

Among the members you are sure to find young people who are interested in, and are capable of carrying out the various repairs that may be necessary. With the aid of the local gas or electric lighting company—and perhaps with that of the

sanitary authorities—the dingy old house may become a veritable Elysium, thanks to your guidance and the enthusiasm of the youthful artisans.

FINANCE

The finance of club management should be simple but efficient, and broadly speaking might come under these three headings: Overheads; Members' Subscriptions; General Funds and Petty Cash.

Overheads might include heating, lighting, cleaning, repairs to club premises, plus the wages of a caretaker . . . altogether a weighty responsibility which should not rest upon the Club Leader alone. General funds would possibly include annual and other donations, proceeds from special functions (concerts, dances, whist drives, etc.), and grants from other sources. Control of these matters should be in the hands of the Management Committee, for no one person wants to be saddled with such details, and it is one of the functions of the Management Committee to deal with such matters. This body should appoint a Treasurer, see that accounts are properly kept, and arrange for auditing. All large items of expenditure will be sanctioned, or otherwise, by the Management Committee, which will also consider special requests made by the Leader in respect of the needs of the club. Incidentally, should expenditure on necessities exceed the funds in hand, the Management Committee will probably take the responsibility for raising funds. This it may do by appealing to interested persons or by organising special functions; but apart from this a Management Committee can be of the greatest assistance to a busy and possibly harassed Leader.

Club Members' Subscriptions.—In most cases subscriptions appear to err on the low side. A member who can gain admittance to a club at the price of a few coppers is less likely to value it than the member who pays an annual subscription commensurate with what he receives from the club in the way

of social amenities, always with an unobtrusive background of purposeful activities. Membership should be regarded as something to be attained, rather than as something to be merely accepted; and the club should be a second and larger home, rather than a place to which one can casually resort upon payment of a weekly subscription. Let the new member be a probationer, say for a month, during which time he pays the usual weekly subscription. At the end of this probation let him be interviewed by the Members' Committee, who will possibly question him as to what value he has found in the club, and what activities he has taken part in (games excepted). The Committee will then tell him whether they accept or reject him as a member, giving their reasons in the latter case.

Upon acceptance the new member should pay an annual subscription of say 5s. (by instalments if this is more convenient). This should entitle him to full membership of the club and its subsidiary activities, such as the dramatic and musical groups, the swimming club, the camping club, and the lending library, though extra charges may be levied for these special activities, according to the cost of maintenance, which in any case should be kept as low as possible.

All periodical subscriptions should be paid weekly. Arrears and attendance are then more easily checked; the cause of any possible irregularity can be discussed in a friendly personal interview, and a remedy suggested. In some few cases a member may really be unable to produce his weekly subscription. Provided he is given a reasonable explanation, the Leader naturally would not wish to debar the member from attendance; but without such an opportunity of explanation the defaulting member would either drift into greater arrears, or would stay away from the club. In any case, when the arrears begin to mount he will feel inclined to stay away and that is the very time when he should not do so. A wise Leader will make the sense of responsibility to both club and fellow-members so palpable that members will always be anxious to liquidate any personal arrears.

Spending Powers of Leader—Petty Cash.

The spending powers of the Leader will be determined by the Management Committee. Obviously a Petty Cash account must be provided for small items of weekly expenditure on such matters as newspapers, magazines, indoor games, replenishments, etc. A good plan is to allocate a percentage of all weekly subscriptions to a fund providing for weekly needs in the club. No Club Leader wants to await the sanction of a committee before he can buy such items as football bladders, ping-pong balls, paints, or materials needed for the easy running of the club. The Leader's needs cannot always be budgetted from one meeting of the Management Committee to another, so a fair amount of floating cash should be at his disposal. No capable Leader will exceed his allowance if fairly treated in the beginning. The intricate procedure of running a club can be understood only by the Leader in charge, and he should be helped, not hindered, by his Management Committee.

Naturally, all items of expenditure will be entered up correctly, no matter how simple the method of book-keeping, and all accounts regularly audited by the auditor appointed by the Management Committee.

CHAPTER IV

PROGRAMME BUILDING

THE Club Programme is the scaffolding around which the whole structure is built. Without it there can only be collapse. The gibe that clubs are often only " cheap hops " can be levelled only at the club that has no definite programme. This does not imply complete rigidity. No one would expect the Club Leader to be able to follow the example of Napoleon, who could take out his watch and say, that at that precise moment

every child aged ten throughout the schools of France would be doing mental arithmetic.

Clubs are not schools. They are designed for the right use of leisure; but leisure is more profitable if it is organised, and not disorderly. It is the easiest thing in the world to run a club, if you just allow the members to drift in, wind up the gramophone, and dance all the evening. The members will enjoy themselves, and the Leader will be saved a great deal of trouble; but the institution will not be a club. It will be merely the original lamp-post around which walls and a roof have been erected.

"But what can I *do?*" cries the young Club Leader. "What shall I put into the programme?" The answer, of course, will vary, according to the type of club—whether it is a boys' club, a girls' club, a twin or a mixed club—and whether it meets on one or more nights a week; it will depend also on the general level of intelligence of the members. I propose, therefore, to give some typical programmes under various headings.

Boys' Clubs.

A Leader should try to plan activities which will fall under three headings, viz.: Physical, Mental and Spiritual. Naturally as many of these activities as possible will be planned for outdoors when the weather permits, for in the open air there is somehow more freedom of thought and action, and the sense of freedom increases the members' aptitude in certain directions as no indoor pursuit seems to do.

Ball games will of course appeal to the majority of lads, but the minority of youngsters who have no aptitude for the more vigorous games (and such will be found in almost every club) should not be overlooked, or the Club Leader will be neglecting those to whom he can perhaps be most helpful. The football team and the cricket eleven will be great attractions. These are traditional and healthy types of team activity, but, even when reserves are included, the majority of the members are still uncatered for. A swimming section, a hiking section, and even

a general athletic section, although these will include lads of varying standards of achievement, will still exclude the members who prefer something less strenuously competitive.

A paper-chase can be varied by posting several runners, in pairs, at various points *en route*, and getting the first pair of runners to carry separate messages to the second pair, the second pair to carry them on to the third, and so on, until the final pair deliver their respective notes at the starting-point. It can be varied also in other ways; adversaries may try to intercept the messenger, and seize the messages.

Games of detection can be played out of doors. Select a scene for the crime, a criminal, and a detective, fake your clues, and then set your lads to unravel the mystery. For the scene of the crime you might choose an old quarry, with its workings, and some woodland cover near at hand basing the plot on a suitable newspaper report of an actual crime.

A cycle run is generally an aim in itself. A cycling party may include a considerable proportion of the members, and will make its own arrangements as a sub-organisation of the larger club. A small group of cyclists, say three or more, might plan their outings on the following lines:

A hiker usually has no other purpose than to enjoy the pleasure of walking on pleasant highways or byways to a definite point. Rambling may be equally pleasant, but is less definite as regards its destination. I suggest that a hike may be planned as the excursion of a small group, who go out to explore the countryside, reach a given objective, and write up a log-book of the whole expedition. Such details as local customs, industries, and so on, might be entered in the log. An account of the weather conditions, not forgetting the clouds seen at certain hours of the day, a record of any strange bird or animal seen or heard, types of vegetation observed, old buildings visited, with their historical associations and local legends—all these provide a fund of material for a log-book. Photographs might be pasted, and also a map of the route, drawn, of course, by the compiler. Each member of the party

could keep his own log-book, or they might work in pairs. There is a definite attraction in such a task, and apart from its educative value, such a log-book will be a source of continual interest to other club members and newcomers. The County Badge Scheme is worth consideration, and all who are not familiar with its possibilities would do well to get "THE COUNTY BADGE" or the "FOURFOLD ACHIEVEMENT," (6d.) from the Oxford University Press.

Indoor activities may be a little restricted by the accommodation available. Let us first of all, irrespective of the premises, consider what activities might be organised, for they can often be adapted to the circumstances.

Games requiring a largish room or hall, to which this kind of activity must be restricted, are billiards, table tennis, badminton, tennis, quoits, and games of a like nature. Small table games might also be played in this room, although chess perhaps requires a quieter atmosphere. Assuming that a quiet room is available (and every effort should be made to provide one), this may be used for drawing, writing for the club magazine, and reading. The library need not necessarily be housed here, but magazines, periodicals and books may be brought here for perusal. If a separate room is available for a library so much the better, but in any case you should insist that your quiet room must be really quiet, for the value, even to adolescents, of a peaceful atmosphere cannot be over-emphasised. The club that lacks a quiet room is neglecting an important means of unobtrusive character-forming, and deserves to lose members, as it probably will.

The pursuit of all kinds of craft work is stimulating to the mind; many a lad can be taught to use his hands very capably, and fortunately the majority of adolescents feel an itch to be making something. Give a boy a piece of wood and a few tools, and help him to make a toy, a model aeroplane, or a useful household article. Let him express himself in his work, and the delight he takes in the fashioning of the article may evoke your admiration for his patience and inventiveness,

and may help to give you a clearer insight into his character.

You might have a repair section where wireless sets, gramophones, and cycles are serviced or doctored. Some clubs have found it an excellent plan to obtain an old motor-car engine, and allow the mechanically-minded members to dismantle it, clean it, and reassemble it. If the whole chassis is obtainable the body-work might be carefully stripped (even in the case of a derelict car), and much valuable skill may be displayed in the operation. Remember that all handicraft work, however humble, has a great background value in respect of future citizenship, apart from the actual material task attempted.

Listening groups may be formed, in conjunction with discussion groups, and, apart from attractive lectures, wireless programmes and gramophone records might be listened to, and afterwards freely discussed. Discussions should always be led by a sufficiently informed person, so that every possible aspect of the subject is explored.

A club magazine is more valuable than it would, at first thought, appear to be. But a magazine, you might say, requires a skilled journalistic outlook, and the work usually falls upon one or two boys. This is not quite true. Of course, your editor will be the best member you can find for the job, but nearly every group possesses an editor in embryo, who, with a little coaching, can take over the work of editing the magazine, and acquit himself creditably. Others, perhaps slightly less capable, can act as reporters for the sports page, the hobbies' page, the social page, the craft-work page, and so on. Your club instructor, too, will add comments, while the librarian and the listening and discussion group leaders will each have something to report. You, as Leader of the Club, will write a "message," and a local personality might be persuaded to write an occasional article, while a competition may produce a short story or so if articles do not flow as steadily as you had anticipated.

It remains for the editor to assess the literary values and accept or reject the contribution accordingly; now, having

decided on the style and " get up " of the magazine, his task is almost completed. If you can obtain a duplicating machine or apparatus the printing can be entrusted to two of the club members, paging and stapling can be done by another two, and then the magazine is ready to be sold—a job for a few more members. If,, on economic grounds, you find it difficult to arrange for the printing of the magazine, why not try a notice-board or wall magazine? Of this only one copy is needed, which is pinned on the notice-board and read by members just as a newspaper is read in the public reading-rooms of our libraries. It would be better to have loose leaves, with two holes punched through the sheets, so that they may be fastened together with tapes or loose-leaf binders. The sheets can then be given out to the various reporters and contributors, so that they can write up their respective articles, etc., in their leisure time at home. Drawings may be included; lino cuts might be printed; and the whole of the magazine might be in manuscript, if the authors are careful to write a legible hand. Even in its elementary stages you should aim at a definite style, and plan your magazine with plenty of illustrations and wide margins, so that the text is made more interesting and the whole form attractive. I have never known such a beginning in magazines to fail. It always attracts great interest, and often leads to the duplication of copies, which may be sold for a nominal sum, and perhaps prove a source of income for the funds of the club.

A word as to duplicators: apart from the jelly and clay types of duplicators, which can be quite effective when small numbers of copies are required there is the stencil type, which involves either typing or writing your copy on a special sheet of waxed paper, and forcing the ink through the stencil thus obtained by means of an inked roller. Innumerable copies can be obtained, and, if you can afford them, models which duplicate automatically and at considerable speed are available. Types of duplicators are legion, but for full details of price and suitability for your particular kind of work, you might write

to Roneo Duplicators, Ellams Duplicators, or Gestetnor Duplicators. Second-hand machines can often be obtained from a dealer in typewriting accessories, or from advertisers in the *Bazaar and Exchange and Mart*, published on Thursdays at 3d.

Below is appended a suggested programme for a Youth Club. Remember to keep to a time-table, for young people like to know what is going on, and when. A business-like attitude in the planning of all club matters adds to the prestige of the club.

Suggested Programme for a Club Opening One Night Weekly from 7.0 p.m. till 9.15 p.m.

A definite programme is essential. A time-table should be drawn up and displayed where all members can see it. This not only gives members an opportunity of enjoying what they like most, but also encourages them to try something new . . . thus the value of the programme is increased and the members' interests are multiplied.

7.0 till 7.30—Warming-up games. These facilitate " mixing," and late arrivals can still join in, for numbers make little difference to this type of game.

7.30 till 7.45—A short, bright talk on any interesting subject. Possibly a Senior Member will be able to give such a talk if an outside specialist is not available.

7.45 till 8.15—Break up into teams for team races and games. If the hall is small one team might now take P.T., games, etc., being taken outside, or in another room. If accommodation allows of all taking P.T. together, and then games together, this will be an advantage, saving the Leader's or Instructor's time.

8.15 till 8.40—General Knowledge questions . . . Impromptu speeches for two minutes (Members pick a subject from a hat . . . a wide choice of subjects is advisable) . . . useful as a team game, marks being awarded to the several teams.

8.40 till 9.10—A Mock Trial . . . or Discussion Group . . . or instruction in such subjects as first aid, Morse signalling, lino cutting, etc., etc.

If you have a Canteen this should be opened towards the close of the evening, unless local custom suggests the middle of the session. I would suggest that if possible an Epilogue be instituted

at 9.10, so that the Canteen period follows, with a free-and-easy end to the evening.

IF YOU CAN MANAGE MORE THAN ONE NIGHT PER WEEK THEN THE ABOVE PROGRAMME CAN BE EXPANDED TO ALLOW OF PART ORGANISED GAMES AND FREE GAMES AND THE USE OF A QUIET ROOM FOR READING, DRAWING, MAGAZINE EDITING, ETC., ETC.

The spiritual side of club life must be governed of course by the Club Leader and the members, in conjunction, perhaps, with some outside authority—that is, if the club is affiliated to any type of religious body. But assuming that your club is, as so many are, quite " unattached," then the value of an epilogue at the end of the evening cannot be over-emphasised. Let the members organise this themselves, one reading a short Bible passage, and another preparing (and preferably writing) a prayer. Here is a club activity of the highest order. Proverbs, or a passage from the Psalms, will afford the most suitable material for this. But the Leader must be strong enough to set the plan in working order ; the rest will follow. I remember that one of my first experiences in this connection was with a group of young lads who had just gone out to work. We met in the most dismal of club rooms, but we had great fun. . . On Sunday we either attended a service in the neighbourhood, or held one of our own. Attendance was not obligatory. One of our number was suddenly taken very seriously ill, and our next meeting was rather melancholy. Before we broke up, one of the boys approached me and said : " Don't you think that before we go we ought all to join in a little prayer for Les.? " Somewhat surprised, I agreed, and, without any trace of self-consciousness the lads stood up reverently while one boy uttered a youthful prayer for our sick member. At subsequent meetings other lads offered prayers, and from that day onwards all our meetings ended with an expression of thanks to the Maker who had given us all such comradeship, and with the hope that we might all prove worthy of it.

An Epilogue is a wonderful feature of club life. Why not adopt the idea ?

Girls' Clubs.

The "One Night-a-Week" Club.

Indoor Activities.

In the "one-night-a-week" club it is usual to have one main activity in which the majority, if not all the girls, can join. This is normally some physical activity such as "Keep Fit" exercises, or country or continental dancing. Obviously the "Keep Fit" exercises call for a qualified teacher and an efficient pianist. In the hands of the expert who knows how to introduce novelties and make the most of the music the girls' enthusiasm will soon be kindled, and there will probably be demands for a dressmaking class in order that the members can make a uniform costume.

Many local educational authorities are quite willing to provide paid physical training instructors for classes in clubs, on evening school terms, which involves mainly the keeping of a register, and the maintenance of a minimum number of members, usually about 12. A tactful letter to the Secretary of the Youth Committee, stating the size and needs of the club, will enable you to ascertain whether any help is forthcoming in the provision of an instructor. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that "Keep Fit" exercises and other forms of physical training should be supervised by a trained instructor, and if neither a paid nor a voluntary teacher can be secured, it is better to select another form of activity, such as country dancing, which can be taught by a zealous leader who is willing to obtain some instruction in the art—usually a fairly simple matter.

Again, however, a note of warning should be sounded. Many girls have already learnt something of country dancing at school under a trained teacher, and they may be tired of it, or, as is even more likely, they may feel that it is a school subject and therefore too childish for grown-up young ladies in a club. If this is so they will probably find continental dancing or American square dancing more to their taste. The Secretary

of the Youth Committee will no doubt be able to give the name and address of an expert in the district who would arrange to give a demonstration in the club of one or another of those very popular forms of dancing.

Incidentally American square dancing appeals to boys, and a good way of arranging a joint evening with the twin Boys' Club is to hold an American Square Dancing Party. Even those members who cannot under any circumstances be induced to set foot on the floor will find entertainment in the comb and mouth-organ band which will provide an excellent accompaniment to the dancing.

Not every girl will want to join in " Keep Fit " exercises. She may be too tired after a whole day on her feet in a shop, or after working long hours in a factory, or she may just have no particular liking for physical activity. To force her into doing anything for which she has no inclination would definitely be a mistake. The Club Leader who is distressed or uneasy because there is someone in the club who is not feverishly active, or who is not being " organised," has not considered the real purpose of a club.

While classes and organised activities are desirable and helpful in a club, they are not the end and purpose of its existence. The Club Leader has only to ask herself whether she would like her own scanty leisure to be organised as drastically as she would like to organise that of her club members, to realise the value of the Quiet Room in the life of the club.

The Quiet Room, if it is at all possible to provide one, can be the focus of club life. It is a room worth much attention in the matter of furnishing, and part of any equipment grant received from the local Education Authority would be well spent in the provision of easy chairs and mats or rugs for the floor. The easy chairs should be light wicker or canvas garden chairs, which can be stacked or folded for storage if the premises are used by other bodies. And the brighter and more cheerful the room, the better. Gay cushions and curtains, bright posters and attractive pictures will make a pleasing

contrast to the drab surroundings in which many members spend their working day. Magazines and books will be appreciated. Magazines can usually be obtained from a public library if the sympathy of the librarian is enlisted, and, of course, the more illustrations they contain the more popular they will be.

Often the Quiet Room can be equipped with a couple of shelves of books on loan, and changeable at intervals, from the County or Borough Library. It is also the obvious place for Committee meetings, discussion groups, and informal talks. A sewing machine can be kept there for use by members who want to alter a frock, or by a group which is receiving instruction in repairing and remodelling clothes, though in the ideal club premises—but alas, how few approach the ideal! —there will be a special handicraft room.

There is no reason why cups of tea should not be brought in from the canteen and drunk in the Quiet Room to the accompaniment of friendly gossip with feliow members, or the Club Leader. To many club members, coming from overcrowded or ill-run homes, the club Quiet Room is the only sitting-room (with all that the term implies) that they know. It should, therefore, approximate, as far as possible, to the family sitting-room in a well-run home, in which friends can meet together and be themselves for a little while, in a world which tends to ignore the value and needs of the individual.

The canteen should follow the " Keep Fit " exercises. In a " One-Night-a-Week Club " it will usually provide only a cup of tea and a cake or biscuit, which two or three girls, working in rotation, can prepare during the last fifteen minutes of the class. A running canteen is not desirable in this type of club, as it attracts those who are engaged in any serious activities, and encourages the apathetic, who might otherwise be taking part in them. Incidentally, those who are not taking part in " Keep Fit " exercises should be kindly but firmly discouraged from enjoying themselves as spectators. It is most unfair to the teacher and the class. The Quiet Room is the place for

those not engaged in organised activity, and here they can read or bring their sewing, knitting, or handicrafts, or play draughts and other quiet games.

After canteen there will probably be time for a dramatic or singing group, while another group may be doing handicrafts or amusing themselves with impromptu dancing.

The club which is open on two nights a week will probably follow a similar programme on each night, except that the main item will vary, handicrafts or drama perhaps taking the place of the "Keep Fit" class.

Opinions differ greatly as to whether closing prayers should appear on the programme of the unattached club. It must be left to the Club Leader to decide whether she sees any value in this practice. If she feels that it is worth while, prayers will usually follow any announcements which are made to the whole club assembled for that purpose, just before closing. This brief meeting for announcements, followed, if desired, by short prayers, is invaluable in developing the club spirit. Through this the club members learn to feel that they are a definite and corporate body, and this feeling will be enhanced if news of past and absent members is given, or letters from them read aloud.

Here is a typical programme for a club meeting on one or two nights a week :—

7.15—7.45 p.m.—Assemble.
Collection of subscriptions.
Games—table tennis, draughts, etc.

MAIN ACTIVITY

7.45—8.30 p.m.—"Keep Fit," Country Dancing, etc.
8.30—8.45 p.m.—Canteen.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

8.45—9.30 p.m.—Dramatic group, handicrafts, or singing.
Impromptu dancing.
9.30—9.40 p.m.—Assembly for announcements and prayers.

The programme for the second evening will be similar,

except that a group activity suggested for one night as optional, will become the main activity for the second evening.

The "Every-Night-in-the-Week-Club."

A club which meets on three or more nights a week is in most cases run by a paid Leader or Warden, and will often have a membership running into hundreds. The programme will perhaps be a little less formal than that at the one-night-a-week-club, and on one evening at least there will be mixed activities.

It is generally assumed that members will attend only on those evenings when activities which particularly appeal to them are on the programme. This assumption, however, is not always borne out by the facts, and it is often found that some members will turn up every night the club is open, including Sundays. This in itself constitutes something of a problem, more particularly in the case of girls, as the club is not meant to replace the home entirely, though it is probable that if such girls are not in the club they will be either in the cinema or the dance-hall.

A frank discussion in the club as to the desirability of spending some time in the home may help to solve the problem, or it may be wise to close the club for one evening in the middle of each week. Invaluable as youth clubs are, it is surely not good to spend the whole of one's leisure in public, and the girl who has got into the habit of seeking companionship every evening of the week will inevitably find herself without resources for her own entertainment or employment, when she is married, and must preforce stay at home.

On the other hand, where the homes of many of the members are such that any form of domestic training is impossible, clubs which are open on several nights a week can do much to prepare girls for the duties of wives and mothers. Classes in cookery, laundry, mother-craft, housewifery, home-nursing and first aid, and hygiene, and talks on choosing a home, etc., can do much to raise the standard of home-making. The girl

will eventually outgrow the club when she reaches the age of twenty or so, and earlier if she acquires a young man, and then the lessons that she has learnt at the club must bear some fruit.

Mixed Activities.

When planning a programme for a mixed club it is obvious that for some purposes, such as physical training, the boys and the girls will be catered for separately, and unless the premises are fairly extensive it will either be necessary to meet on separate nights for such activities, or to have only activities which are suitable for both sexes. Country dancing and American square dancing have already been suggested. Ballroom dancing is another obvious suggestion, but in actual practice it is often found that the girls can dance much better than boys of their own age, so that the latter are left to grace the walls, while the girls dance together. The obvious solution is to have a ballroom dancing class, with a qualified teacher and a definite time limit, so that a mixed evening does not degenerate into a "cheap hop."

Dramatics, discussion groups, talks, and listening groups are all activities whose interest and value is enhanced by the participation of both sexes. The presence of the boys, who are usually much more willing to contribute to discussion, is a stimulus to the girls, who on their own are often unwilling to join in activities which they consider dull.

Outdoor Activities

Summer time is often considered the slack period for clubs, when no one turns up for weeks at a time. This need not be the case if a determined effort is made to prepare an interesting programme beforehand. Cycling, rambling, swimming, and outdoor games, such as rounders, for the younger members, are among the possibilities. Cycling and rambling can be made opportunities for exchanging visits with distant clubs, the meeting taking the form of a social or informal dance. Local beauty spots or places of historical interest give point to

a ramble or a cycle run, and a record of the excursion in the club log-book will enhance the enjoyment of such outings.

Regular swimming parties in the swimming baths of the neighbourhood are a feature of the summer programme of many clubs, and these visits can be both pleasurable and useful if training is given in life-saving.

Tennis, boating if there is a river available, camping at the week-end, and cultivating the club garden are other summer activities, and these can be interspersed with periodical club " socials " or dances.

Unfortunately, although it is an exaggeration to say that it rains in the summer on *every* club night, it does rain on some evenings, or the wind is chilly, and on such occasions it is advisable to open the club, if only for a few games, or a chat in the Quiet Room. In this way the valuable contact between the Leader and the members is maintained. Security is an essential, if the difficult process of growing up is to be accomplished satisfactorily, and anything which gives a feeling of permanence, such as the opening of the club on such occasions, is of immense value.

Canteen.

The cup of tea in the club is an amenity which no Club Leader can afford to despise. In large clubs which are open on several evenings a week the canteen is often elevated almost to the status of a snack-bar, in order to meet the needs of club members who may come to the club from their work, or who may have long distances to travel. In this case a properly-equipped kitchen, preferably with a hatch, and a room with small tables and chairs, as gaily decorated as possible, are essential.

In the smaller club, obviously, a cup of tea, with biscuits or cakes and sandwiches on special occasions is quite sufficient. There is no time for more; though the time spent on the canteen, if it is not excessive, is of great value. Tongues wag over a cup of tea, and it is then that the Leader gets to know

her girls. They will talk, cup in hand, of their dress problems, their ambitions, their visits to the cinema making innumerable self-revealing remarks which a wise Leader will remember, thereby adding to her knowledge of the members. She may occasionally be shocked or disappointed, but if she wants to retain the girls' confidence and trust she will not show it. The Leader who finds that natural conversation ceases when she approaches has failed in some way. She has perhaps been censorious, tactless, or disapproving, or her manner has implied criticism, and such an attitude is wounding to the sensitiveness and unsureness of adolescence. The art of being natural with young folk is not easily learnt, and will be achieved only by the humble in spirit. The club members have come to the club neither to be reproved nor to be improved. Reproof should never be offered; as for improvement, which may be achieved indirectly, if it does occur, the Club Leader may thank heaven fasting; because she has done more than her job.

CHAPTER V

PHYSICAL TRAINING

PHYSICAL TRAINING requires very careful handling to ensure that it will be really effective in a Youth Club of the type we have in mind. The position with adolescents is definitely not so elastic as with school-children. It will be obvious that the school curriculum is planned so that no undue strain is placed upon the young gymnasts, that exercises are graded according to the physical development of the children, due consideration being given to their nutrition.

With the best intentions in the world, and with all respect for the splendid work by Club Leaders and organisers, we must admit that no carefully prepared curriculum is provided for the average club member. Such matters as his working hours

his standard of nutrition, etc., he will generally regard as his own business so that the Physical Training instructor or adviser cannot make careful allowance for them, as a conscientious trainer would wish. Yet these points ought to be taken into consideration by the P. T. instructor. Carefully prepared tables of graded instruction in P. T., admirable as they may be in themselves, may actually do very little good, and may even do considerable harm if the age, physical development, working hours, nutrition, and housing of the lad are not taken into account. It is, moreover, a moot point whether an hour's P. T. once or twice a week is of any real benefit to a rapidly developing lad. Apart from a strenuous loosening of limbs and muscles which are almost unused between classes, how can one hope for any real benefit.

A better solution would be a regular daily class of 15 minutes, with exercises specially adapted for the tired—indeed, often exhausted—manual worker, quite apart from the exercises planned for the sedentary worker. Only too often such lads are allowed—and even persuaded—to join an over-zealous P. T. instructor's class, merely because the majority of young people like P. T., and those who don't or are over-tired are often stupidly dubbed slackers.

Special arrangements of this kind involves a little trouble, but if we have the service of youth at heart, if we are anxious to raise the standard of our young people, who constitute the future backbone of the nation, we should regard no effort as too great.

Exercises might be so arranged and graded as almost to meet individual needs, or, at all events, to meet the needs of very small groups of lads who are similarly circumstanced, and if regular classes in the club cannot be attended, simple exercises to be done at home on rising, or at a given time of the day, when the mind and body can really relax for the purpose, could be devised. To be really beneficial these should be simple and require no supervision, and by way of encouragement a chart could be provided on which the lad would keep

a record of progress. If you make P. T. a daily regular habit, so that its routine keeps the body and mind alert and flexible, the more strenuous work of the club gymnasium will not only seem more attractive, but will be definitely beneficial. After all, we are trying to make our young people self-reliant; yet there are features in our P. T. classes which militate against the spirit of self-reliance. Youth is very ready to worship the athlete, without realising that some of the greatest athletes have been self-made; for much can be achieved by determination and self-control. A weakly lad, if he is given suitable advice—and he will not be told to make himself strong and brawny by entering the "he-man's" P. T. class—may grow up fit and healthy.

Physical Training is a specialist's job, but owing to the lack of qualified instructors Club Leaders must make the most of the material and opportunities that come their way. There are many excellent handbooks on the subject, which, if they are read carefully, and are not taken too literally by the novice, will help to build up the physique of youths who, in the absence of any sort of training might become degenerate weeds. As P. T. is an activity it would be wise to allow no onlookers; those who are interested must join in the exercises or be excluded from the gymnasium, whether this be a fully-equipped hall or a room cleared for the purpose by stacking its furniture.

Some enthusiasts are given to complaining that the standard of P. T. in the generality of clubs is low. Need that worry us unduly? One might equally well complain that the standard of any club activity is low. The enthusiast on any subject is always critical, to the point of considering that his or her speciality is all that really matters. For the club to be successful, all-round standards need not be very exalted. The thing that matters is that we should take the youth whose life might otherwise be aimless, and give him the chance to develop in as many directions as possible. An alert mind in an alert body, neither developed at the expense of the other, should be our aim. All-round fitness is far more desirable than over-

developed brawn or over-stimulated brain. Where there is latent ability or talent it will seek development by its own impetus. Exceptional members will give the P. T. instructor an opportunity of specialising a little, but even so he should still think of the club as a whole, and should not attempt to force the standard up because of one or two members who are able to excel.

Reverting again to the inexperienced Leader who has no qualified P. T. instructor: he should remember that regular hikes (not too long at first) are a natural and easy method of getting the members to use their muscles. Walking is one of the finest exercises possible. Inculcate the habit of walking, and plan regular excursions at the week-end as far as possible. Try to persuade the members to wear light clothing and to walk with some object in view, rather than loaf along aimlessly. While they are out in the open air we want them to take full advantage of it—to expand their lungs, to move easily yet vigorously, to use their eyes, to listen to the natural sounds of the countryside—in short, to be alert in every way possible. Such a hike—or better still, a series of such excursions—can be most valuable; if you can include a swim during the outing so much the better.

Books worth Reading

Recreation and Physical Fitness for Youths and Men	2/6—Board of Education
Do. for Girls and Women	2/6—Board of Education
Eight Ball Studies	Central Council of Recreative Physical Training.
Exercises and Activities with Sticks for Men and Boys. R.P.T. Classes	Previous Publishers.
Swimming.....	Sid Hedges. Evans Bros.
Modern Boxing.....	Len Harvey. 2/6, Blackie
Swimming Instructions.....	Amateur Swimming Assn. 1/-
Handbook of Suggestions on Health Education	Board of Education, 6d.

"*Tumbling*" and many others from Athletic Publications Ltd., Link House, Greville Street, London, E.C. 1.

Wrestling	by P. Loghurst, 2/6. Blackie
Vaulting	by Bickerdike, 2/–
Yourself and Your Body	by Sir W. Grenfell, 3/6
	Both from Boy Scouts' Assn., 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

Drama in the Club.

There is no doubt that many young people are entirely put off by the mention of "drama." The very word intimidates them. The Leader ought to make it plain that the subject can be approached in such easy stages that its difficulties are never at all intimidating. Standards can be varied to suit individual needs, but the performers must always aim at excellence.

Because standards of achievement appear too high for novices, because classical plays are so often suggested by enthusiastic producers, interest in the subject is often killed in the very clubs to which it might be most helpful. And this, not so much because of the ineptitude of the members in respect of casting, or choosing a play, but because of a wrong approach to an art which, as regards its elements, comes quite naturally to most people.

A few directions and some personal examples given to the whole club will awaken interest in the subject. You can give illustrations of the correct "business" of many simple actions or gestures—of entrances and exits, of reading a book or letter, or telephoning. Take these simple actions and show how they are often performed by the novice, and then show how they must be performed if they are to appear perfectly natural to the spectators. There is much to be learned as regards the manner of placing the characters on the stage; interest must be focussed on the leading personalities; bad placing may ruin an otherwise perfect interpretation of a character. The most natural and ordinary actions, such as shaking hands, sitting down, removing one's gloves, one's overcoat—things that we all do unconsciously in everyday life—may become most painfully self-conscious on a lighted stage; but the attempt to exhibit

them in their true perspective, without over-emphasis of any kind, may become quite fascinating to the apathetic member who professes to have no aptitude for play-acting.

Later on you can show how the actor must try to live the part he has to portray. He must assume his mannerisms, etc., before he actually enters the " set." It is easy to realise that if he adopts such mannerisms only as he enters his performance will probably lack conviction. The whole point is that the actor must seem to *be* the character he is representing, rather than give the impression that he is merely imitating his mannerisms.

All these points can be discussed in a general way and illustrated, in a talk which will be of real interest to members, whether they intend to act or not, and now is the time to go a step further. You might select three or four sets of characters from among the club members to illustrate the points that you have raised. This will cause much amusement and will also be most instructive. So far all illustrations have been in dumb show. Now you can show how inflection in speech can make or mar a certain " line." Give several examples of the ways in which the line can be spoken, and then ask for volunteers to enact your little scene : such, for instance, as the following :

Girl : " You are late, Jim."
Jim : " Sorry, I had to remain behind."
Girl : " Remain behind . . . what, at work ? "
Jim : " Yes."
Girl : " Oh, well, never mind ! Are we going to the cinema ? "
Jim : " No, I don't think I want to this evening."
Girl : " Why, what's the matter, Jim ? "
Jim : " My foreman was killed to-day."
Girl : " Oh . . . Jim, how awful ! "

A simple enough little scene really, but a great deal of individuality can be expressed in its enactment. Different actors will make it " live " (or fail to do so) in quite different ways, and this is where the real interest in drama begins to manifest itself. You can easily write other little scenes, and get the members to act them. Perhaps at this stage we ought to

halt a moment and suggest that for those who are liable to become tongue-tied miming might be employed as a beginning.

In this the meaning of the scene is conveyed entirely by expression, movement and gesture. True, some miming plays are accompanied by a spoken commentary, but this is usually read off-stage and is not spoken by the actors.

In the beginning, such scenes might be presented in the most elementary form, by getting two or three members to mime a fable, or better still, a newspaper paragraph, such as this :

> " A lady observing that a youth was acting suspiciously in a large store, watched him, and saw him steal a handbag. She told the Manager, and together they accosted the youth, who was brought before the Court last Wednesday."

If you rehearse such incidents several times (preferably giving typed copies of the little scenario to the actors), facility of gesture and expression will soon be achieved, so that spoken drama will become a natural step forward.

Begin with short plays and a small cast, to ensure that effectness is not sacrificed to length and a crowded stage. While a mixed cast is preferable, try to choose a play which will give one member of each sex a really interesting part.

Remember too, that rehearsals must be thorough. If you allow a player to rely on grease-paint and costume, then the final result will probably disappoint you. Characterisation should of course be thoroughly studied ; the player must be absolutely " in " his part, so that his confidence in himself cannot easily be shaken ; then the addition of grease-paint and general make-up will merely be superficial finish to his performance. If any actor gives the impression before the foot-lights of having merely adopted a disguise by way of imitation, the counterfeit will be very obvious to the audience, and will prove an unsatisfactory feature of the production. Having made an effort to interest members in the most elementary approach to drama, you will probably find that they will ask you to go further, and to introduce drama as a regular activity.

Such things as stagecraft, scenery, lighting effects, costumes, make-up, and plays, need very detailed comment, and such points are most adequately covered in the respective titles of books here listed :—

A Book of Make-up by Ward 4/- French.
Let's do a Play by Rodney Bennett 3/6, Nelson.
Let's get up a Concert by R. Bennett and H. S. Gordon 3/6, Nelson.
Home-made Lighting Apparatus by A. Wilson
Acting Improvised by R. G. Newton Nelson.
Amateur Actor, The, by F. Mackenzie Nelson.
Scenic Equipment for a small Stage by A. Wilson. Allen & Unwin
Small Stage, The, and its Equipment by A. Wilson. Allen & Unwin
Modern Make-up for Stage and Screen by N. E. B. Wolters. Lovat & Dickson
Practical Miming by G. Pickersgill. Pitman
Small Stage Properties and Furniture by N. Clarkson. Allen & Unwin
Mood Music 1/- Gramophone Co.
Exemption from Entertainment-Tax : Get Form E.D. 40 from the P.O. or Excise Tax office.
Wigs can be obtained from " Bert," 46, Portnall Road, London, W.8.
List of Plays for Boys and Men : British Drama League, 1/-, Nelson.
Guide to selecting Plays by Samuel French.
Small Stage Properties by Mrs. Nesfield Cookson. Allen & Unwin
Play Readings : The National Council of Social Service, 26, Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1.

Handicrafts for Girls.

Although a skilled handicrafts instructor is a tremendous help in the club there is much which can be done by the amateur. A Leader in search of ideas can readily obtain them by writing to a reputable firm which specialises in handicrafts, and asking for a list of tools and materials and books of instructions.

Toy-making, leather work, poker-work and painting on white-wood articles (egg-cups, powder bowls, serviette rings, etc.), glove-making, netting, lamp-shade making, embroidery and stitch-craft, stool-making, etc., are all well within the scope of the average amateur who can follow simple instruc-

tions. Of course, a beginning will be made with the simpler articles, but as skill is acquired, more difficult work can be undertaken.

The main object of handicrafts is to give expression to the creative urge, which modern industry, with its accent on specialisation, denies to the manual worker. At the same time, the Leader will realise that handicrafts can be employed as a means of training the girls in taste and the appreciation of beauty. The girls can be led to appreciate the virtue of simplicity, the art of blending colours, and the choice of suitable design. The merely pretty will begin to lose its attraction, and the homes of the future may well gain something in beauty because the housewife who has been taught handicrafts in the club has learnt to prefer line to flamboyance.

In these days of material shortage both Leader and girls will find their ingenuity taxed to discover substitutes. For example, plumbers' felt can be used to make slippers, and so can gaily coloured upholsterer's webbing. Again, black-out material doubled, "sandwiched" with wadding, and quilted by machining in criss-cross designs, makes another excellent material for slippers. Quite inexpensive gloves can be made from the chamois leather sold for window-cleaning, and the rag-bag will provide innumerable scraps of material for soft toys, or for patch work, which is once more enjoying a vogue. Stuffing, too, may tax the ingenuity of the members, a problem which can sometimes be solved by using dried lawn-clippings, if all other sources fail.

Knitting for the Forces in war-time is a very popular activity in Girls' Clubs. Even this, however, may pall in the course of time, and when this happens the changes may be rung by getting into touch with some such body as the Mission to Seamen, which may arrange for the club to "adopt a port." Such an undertaking provides a variety of tasks, varying from the knitting of sea-boot stockings, mine-sweepers' gloves, and helmets, to the making up of small individual parcels for distribution to seamen in the port at Christmas-time. More-

over, the club may be induced to undertake all kinds of activities in order to raise funds for wool and parcels, and the life of the club as a whole will be stimulated.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSIONS AND DEBATES

DISCUSSIONS and debates are not the easiest of activities to arrange and carry out successfully. Nevertheless, they are well worth time and effort, for they are not only educational, in that they open up new lines of thought, but they also promote clear thinking, the more lucid expression of ideas, and tolerance of another person's point of view. There are few better methods of training in the practice of democracy. It is the hall-mark of a good citizen to have a point of view worth defining, and the ability not only to state it clearly, but also to give reasons for his opinions. Discussions and debates in the club will make for production of such citizens.

Unless the club consists mainly of members who have had some experience of discussions and debates at school, or unless there is a definite demand from the Club Committee for a full-dress debate, a beginning should be made in a very small way. Members are inclined to be shy of expressing their opinions if they feel that the occasion is a special one. They will be much more inclined to speak up if the discussion develops out of what is apparently a casual chat round the " Quiet Room " fire. The topic, if deliberately chosen, should not be too highbrow. The main thing is to get the members used to the idea of talking and expressing their ideas. A casual remark, such as : " Oh, I always go to see Spencer Tracy, whatever film he is in," can always be developed by a skilful Club Leader into a discussion on the importance of the film star as compared with the

story, which may lead, for example, to a discussion of the value of personality.

The cinema plays such a large part in the lives of young people to-day that a wise Leader will keep his knowledge with the latest film and film-stars up to date, so that he can discuss them with understanding and without any suggestion of intellectual superiority. A good film will provide many topics for discussion, from "Do gangster films encourage crime?" to "Which do you enjoy most—films about working-class people or about the wealthy?"

Such informal discussions round the fire may very well lead up to the suggestion: "Why not have a proper discussion or debate on the matter?" A discussion is, of course, less formal than a debate; its object is to elicit facts, whereas a debate is an exercise in the art of speaking, its object being to score debating points, and to convince the opposition of error, either by force of argument or by witty criticism. Obviously debate is much more difficult than discussion and should perhaps be attempted only after the members have acquired a certain facility of speech through exercising it in discussion.

Nevertheless, nearly all young people like ritual, and will appreciate the formalities of a properly conducted meeting, complete with a chairman, who will tactfully keep the speakers in order and prevent them from wandering from the point. A genial sense of humour, which enlivens the proceedings without wounding susceptibilities, is a great asset in a chairman, who, however, should never forget that a chairman's function is to control the meeting discreetly and not to swamp it with his own personality.

It is helpful, in a properly conducted discussion, to have the subject, stated if possible as a clear-cut question, prominently displayed beforehand, so that members can have time to consider their point of view. The discussion should be opened by a first speaker, who will have made a full study of the subject, and who, as he proceeds, will make statements and suggest ideas which can be taken up and discussed by the

listeners. It cannot, however, be too strongly emphasised that a discussion is not an argument. There is no question at all of "winning" or "losing," and the attitude of the groups should be that all points of view which are not merely frivolously expressed are worthy of record and consideration.

In order to give purpose to the discussion there might be a group "secretary" or "reporter," who will note down the general findings of the group, and prepare a short summary or report. In any case, the Leader (or chairman) of the group should round off the discussion with a brief summary.

The chief dangers to be avoided by a discussion group are, wandering from the point, and speaking too long and too often. The remedy against these ills lies in the hands of the chairman, who must cultivate the virtues of firmness, humour, and tact; and the greatest of these is tact.

An extension of the idea of an occasional discussion group to discuss a particular topic is to invite a speaker who is an expert on his subject to speak on it for twenty minutes or half an hour, his address to be followed by questions or discussion; or to take some well-known and recently published book on a topic of general interest, such as education or town-planning, and discuss it chapter by chapter, a different member each week being responsible for making a study of one particular chapter, summarising it, and introducing the subject. The wireless listening group also is to be commended, always provided that the club possesses a radio, and that it happens to meet on the evening of the appropriate broadcast: a combination of circumstances not always attainable. The difficulty, however, can sometimes be overcome in the case of a twin club by arranging for the enthusiasts to combine with the enthusiasts of neighbouring clubs to form an inter-club listening and discussion group. In the village with one club the solution would seem to lie either with the long-suffering Leader or with an adult "friend" of the club, who would allow a sitting-room to be used for the purpose.

A debate as we have indicated is a much more formal affair

than a discussion, and has a widely different purpose. While the aim of the discussion is to increase knowledge, pursue truth, and develop the powers of thinking and expression, a debate is mainly an exercise in the art of argument and reasoning, and depends for its success on facility in speaking, quickness of thought, a sense of humour, and a ready wit. And though increase of knowledge and discovery of truth may result from a debate, they are, as it were, by-products of an activity whose main concern is the effective use of words. Incidentally, it should be added that the word "debate," as used in clubs, has obviously a rather different meaning and intention to that which it bears when applied to procedure in the Houses of Parliament, though the formality is observed there and usually followed in less august assemblies.

In a debate the "Speaker" acts as chairman, and all speakers on the motion address him, opening their remarks as they rise with the formula: "Mr. Speaker, Sir——." Other speakers are usually referred to as "The Honourable Member——." Two or three supporters of the motion, beginning with the proposer, sit on the Speaker's right hand; those opposing it on the left. The Speaker opens the debate by introducing the subject, in accordance with the usual formula: "That this House is of the opinion—or considers that——" etc., announcing the names of the speakers, and stating the time-limit for the speeches, the expiration of the time allowed being indicated by the touching of the bell on the table before him. The Speaker then calls upon the proposer to open the debate. His opening speech is followed by the reply from the opposer; a supporter of the motion is the third speaker, and a member of the opposition the fourth. As a rule the debate is then thrown open to the House, a new and shorter time-limit being imposed. It is, of course, no longer necessary for speakers to support and oppose the motion alternately. At given intervals or when interest is beginning to flag, the Speaker gives the proposer an opportunity of speaking again in reply, after which the House "divides" tellers being appointed to count the

"Ayes" and "Noes." The result is communicated to the Speaker who declares that the motion is accepted or rejected by X votes to Y.

As in the case of discussion groups the debate gains interest and "finish" if the subject has been announced beforehand, so that the speakers have prepared their speeches. Only the long-practised speaker can hope to hold an audience, even for a few minutes, without some previous preparation.

Mock-trials are occasionally attempted by clubs, though, like debates, they must be skilfully conducted, and well prepared if they are to be effective. They are of value in arousing interest in the administration of justice, the function of the jury, and the procedure of law-courts. As, however, such procedure is usually beyond the scope of the average Club Leader, it is often a good plan to enlist the help of a legal expert, a lawyer, or perhaps a probation officer, who may be interested in the club. With his guidance and assistance it may be possible to steer the club through the intracacies of the law-court, though this is certainly not an adventure to be undertaken lightly.

A final word of warning, and a plea! Youth is nearly always rather violent and extreme in its views. It is always ready to demolish the old and rebuild the new Jerusalem overnight, with scant regard for the feelings or beliefs of its seniors. In any case, it considers that anyone who has passed his thirtieth year has already one foot in the grave. In the face of this violence the natural reaction of the older person is to be repressive, and perhaps censorious, with a suggestion of a superior attitude, as much as to say: "Yes, my boy, but when you are my age——" But this attitude is wrong. Youngsters who think courageously and talk emphatically, however much they may shock and disturb their elders, are often the salt of the earth when it comes to the question of citizenship. It is they who will care about the social problems of to-morrow, and endeavour to remedy them. To the adult their heresies may be annoying, but there is

surely a place in society for those who have learnt how to tilt at abuses.

Appendix :

Suggestions for Discussion and Debates

Two or three subjects have already been suggested in the text, but many others will occur to the reader. One plan is to visit a local cinema or theatre as a club outing, and afterwards discuss the film or play. The plot, the acting, the moral influence, the presentation, etc., should all be considered.

Subjects :

The Cinema :

What makes a good film ?
Is the cinema a good influence ?
What is the value of censorship ?
The Sunday opening of cinemas.

Sport :

Should it be amateur or professional ?
Do we make too much of sport in our national life ?

Citizenship :

The ideal house.
The ideal town.
Town versus village.
Should the school-leaving age be raised ?
Should there be an examination system ?
Should capital punishment be abolished ?
Should it be compulsory to vote at elections ?
The influence of the Press.

Debates.

Subjects for debate are often rather more frivolous than the above. Hardy annuals, such as " Is beauty a greater asset to a woman than brains ? " or " Is it woman's place to remain in the home ? " may still provide amusement. The usual experience in clubs, however, is that members are inclined to be

very serious-minded, and like to discuss such topics as: Bolshevik Russia; Nazism; Conditions of Labour, etc. Provided that such discussions are confined to a discussion group, do not overflow into other club activities, and are carried out under the rules of discussion and debate, they are of great value in the training of citizens.

Films.

The film can play a very useful and definite part in club activities. While " talkie " films are obviously preferred, they may, on the score of expense, have to be ruled out as unavailable. We are thus compelled to fall back on the silent film-projector, a much less costly machine, which even in war-time is procurable by Youth Organisations. Second-hand machines of both types can of course be obtained, but unless the Leader is something of an expert he should seek impartial advice before deciding to purchase a second-hand projector. A local dealer in photographic apparatus, who should be able to discover any possible defects, will prove an invaluable ally, and will more than save you the fee which he may charge for his services.

The type of projector and the size of films—whether 9.5 mm., 16 mm., or 8 mm.—must depend on the club's resources; but it must be remembered that the larger the film the better the picture; small films, too, are a nuisance to handle as compared with the larger sizes. Of course, the larger films are more costly to hire or buy, and the larger projectors are more expensive. There are projectors on the market which by means of interchangeable mechanisms are able to take two or three sizes of films. These are, of course, a great boon, and their cost is not greatly in excess of that of an ordinary projector.

Screens are of various types. Generally speaking, perhaps the roller type of screen, which is unrolled and supported by stretchers, or hung from hooks in the wall, is the most portable. These are sometimes expensive; they are usually of the silvered or beaded variety, and are directional. This means that persons

whose line of vision is not perpendicular to the centre of the screen, will obtain a less brilliant view. In spite of this drawback (which is not very serious in the case of a small gathering) a silver screen is to be preferred, as it gives a brilliant picture, evenly lighted, and far more alive than one projected on to a dead white surface. For a permanent screen, which can be left in its place, and need not be transportable, it is a good plan to silver a smooth sheet of plywood or stout cardboard. The silver or aluminium paint is best sprayed on with an air-brush, as the ordinary painter's brush will inevitably leave marks which will tend to spoil the picture. The surround of the screen should be black, and as wide as possible, since light reflected from the picture and from the beam of the projector will detract from the clean-out brilliancy so desirable in film projection.

Silent films, unless purely educational, seem rather dull to those accustomed to expect a sound record in association with the visual image. Sub-titles will explain the "story," but the atmosphere of the film is evoked even in "talkie" films largely by music and sound-effects. A really good and adaptable pianist, who can provide a suitable extempore musical background, will greatly increase the attraction of your silent film show. A good gramophone, with a large selection of records, may be almost as useful. You could even train two or three members to provide such effects as rain, wind, crashes, motor-horns, locomotives, galloping horses, etc., etc. All these will enhance the success of your show, and will greatly divert the "noises off" department.

The projection itself should be entrusted to two selected members of the club. No Leader should be compelled to undertake the job, no matter how valuable the machine or the films. We are training young people to accept responsibilities: very well, let them do so in this case. Among other things, they must see that the screen is completely covered by the picture. By this, I mean that the black edges of the screen itself should form the perimeter of the image, not the mask of

the projector, or an irregular whitish margin may be visible round the picture.

Films are often received wrongly wound. All you have to remember is that whatever size of film you are using, the film must be threaded through the gate so that the emulsion side (the less glossy surface) faces the screen. Remember this, and you will generally avoid the mistake of showing titles the wrong way round. Very few films are so printed that the glossy celluloid should face the screen.

I would certainly urge that you should obtain permission from the manager of your local cinema for your embryo operators to visit his projection room. Though a comparison between the commercial machines and effects and those at your disposal may verge upon the ridiculous, the well-equipped projection room and the professional operator will so impress your members that they will take their job seriously, and will make the most of the opportunity provided by the club cinema.

Apart from the definite entertainment or instruction to be derived from films, some of which may perhaps require the accompaniment of a lecture, there are possibilities in the film discussion group. Show two films of contrasted types, and persuade the members to discuss them. You will have to give them a lead in order to get them to talk, but you will find that in the darkness normally shy members will pluck up courage, venturing on comments that may induce them to take part in a further discussion on some later occasion. Contrasted films must be carefully selected if they are to achieve just the necessary balance. Here are a few suggestions :—

1. Travel : Scottish Scenery, Lochs and Mountains.
2. The English Lake District.

1. The Conquest of the Air.
2. The Railways.

1. Nursing as a Career.
2. Work in a Newspaper Office.

1. Life in a Monastery.
2. Youth Organisations (Specialist Films).

1. How the Post Office works.
2. How the R.S.P.C.A. works.

1. Uses of Bakelite.
2. Making a stained glass window.

1. Swimming.
2. Football.

1. Binding a book.
2. Making a stool.

1. Training R.A.F. Pilots.
2. Work on a Minesweeper.

1. The W.R.E.N.S.
2. The Fleet Air Arm.

1. A Policeman's Life.
2. A Surgeon's Life.

Etc., etc., etc.

Books Recommended

Mood Music, from The Gramophone Co., Hayes, Middlesex. 1/-
Film Technique, by Pudovkin, pub. Newnes 3/6
Cinema as a Graphic Art, by Vladim, pub. Newnes 3/6
The Cinema To-day, by Spencer & Whalley, pub. Oxford University Press 4/6
Films and Projector Equipment List, etc., from Wallace Heaton, Bond Street, London, W., 1, and from The City Sale & Exchange, 2, Poultry, Cheapside, London, E.C. 2.
Films from the Empire Film Library and the G.P.O. Film Library, all at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, London, S.W. 7
Films and Research Literature of a very useful order is obtainable from the National Film Library, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1.
Films about Movement and Health, a pamphlet from The Central Council of Recreative Physical Training, 58, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1. 9d.
Film Lists from R. W. Proffitt Ltd., 49–51, Knowslet Street, Bolton.
Films from Educational & General Services, Tower House, Woodchester, near Stroud, Gloucester.
Films from Health & Cleanliness Council, Aldwych House, Aldwych, London, W.C. 2.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC IN THE CLUB

POSSIBLY the musicians among the readers of this book will already have decided that there should be a music group in the club. I assume that you will call together all those members who can play or sing, and that you will form a band or a choir from among those who respond to your call. But what of the others, perhaps the majority who boast of no musical training or even any aptitude for music. Music is a great activity in itself an activity making for happiness, and even though the efforts of the novice may be somewhat discordant to the sensitive ears, the effort to achieve passable results, and to improve upon them, gives great satisfaction to the executant, and with practice he should soon be able to play his part.

Singing comes more or less naturally to all. In group singing the most reluctant will take courage and join in an easy and well-known song. Community singing can be made more interesting by splitting the members into two groups and allowing the boys and girls to sing simultaneously two different songs such as: "The Minstrel Boy" and "Loch Lomond," or "John Brown's Body" and "D'ye ken John Peel."

Do not be satisfied with the bawling or twittering voices which you may have been glad enough to get at first. Even in a mere "sing-song" you should insist that the singers should carefully control the volume of their voices, so that the effect should be as artistic as possible. Let solos linger where this is necessary or effective; let the choruses crash in rhythmically, and with clear-cut well-rounded words, and always insist on a clear-cut ending. Never allow a singer to hang on to his notes in a chorus; above all, avoid ragged edges. The most mundane or trivial chorus or round must be treated carefully if an effective result is to be achieved.

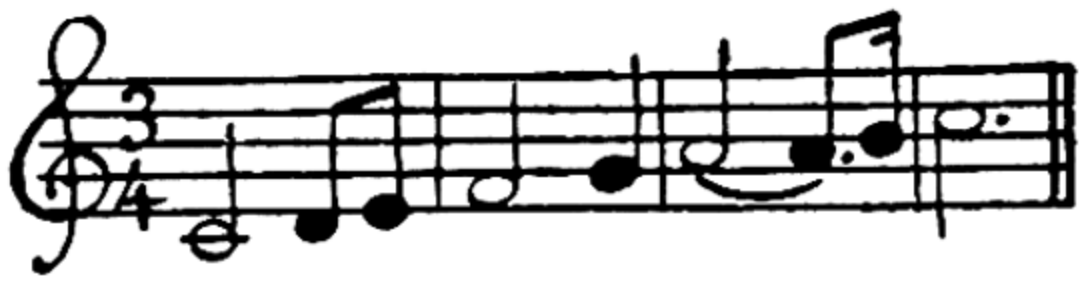
Bands

Having acquired a certain facility on some musical instrument, the average club member will doubtless be anxious to take part in some sort of instrumental combination. The tactful Leader, having realised the musical limitations of such members, will try to foster a sense of rhythm and an understanding of correct timing, without which no band can give a tolerable performance.

The easiest and most enjoyable way of instilling a sense of rhythmic feeling in a group of performers is by means of a percussion band, and if anyone suggests that this is a childish expedient, you can reply that most beginnings are very much the same whether the beginners are children or adolescents. Moreover, the band will not stop at percussion, it will aim at progressive development.

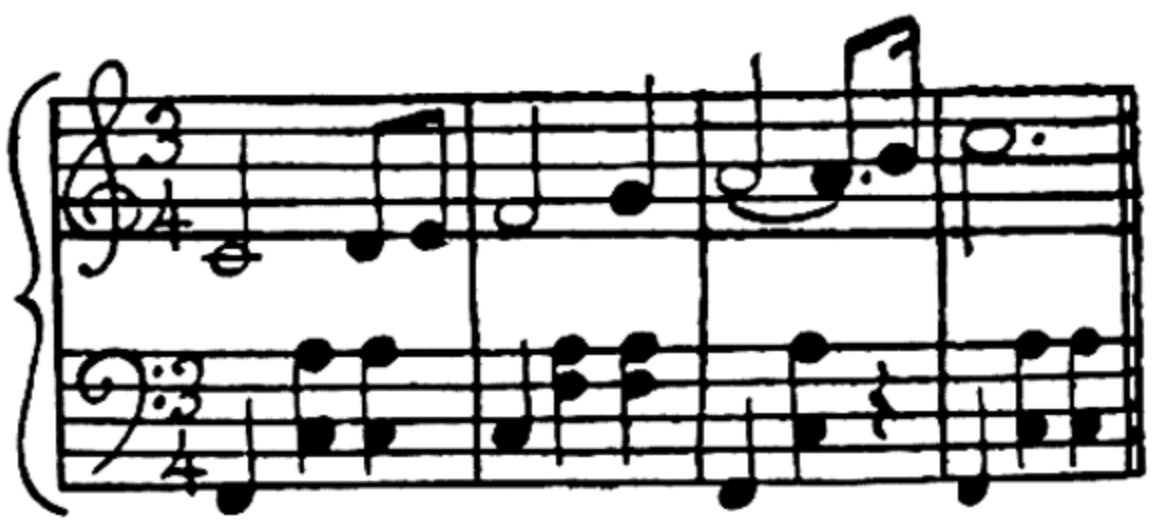
The instrumentation of such a band will comprise cymbals, triangles, tambourines, castenets, jingle bells, and drums; others may be used, but these are usually sufficient. Make a few broad rules. Triangles beat every note of the melody; tambourines follow the accompaniment; cymbals play the accented beats; drums roll or beat steadily throughout most of the composition; castanets and jingle bells reinforce the rhythm and melody respectively. All movements must be made with a loose, flexible wrist, or fatigue will result, and the performance will lack the spontaneity expected of percussion. If you have a good pianist it would be opportune at this stage to point out to the band that a tune consisting of a succession of different notes all equal in time can be quite without appeal. Illustrate by playing one octave of the scale of C thus:

and then explain that rhythm will make those notes live and be quite unrecognisable as a scale. Illustrate on piano :



The same eight notes now have rhythmic sense ; you may call them a melody. You might now get the triangles to tap out this tune ; then remind them that as yet there is nothing for the rest of the band to do. Very well, then ; we must find something for them to do. What do we want ? Ask the band, and you *may* get the right answer : " An accompaniment "—" Some chords "—" Harmony "—" A vamp ! "

If you now play several accompaniments in different times—2-4, 4-4, 6-8, 3-4, etc.—it will not take long for the young bandsmen to realise which one is needed for this tune, and then you might rehearse them on this :



A good pianist could build up or extemporise on this tune, providing a complete little waltz for the band to practice. Having made the instrumentalists aware of their place in a 3-4 measure, rehearse them in 2-4, 4-4, and then 6-8. Do not prompt them too much, but merely correct any blatant errors, for at this stage they will be exploring and perhaps overstressing the importance of their parts. After a few minutes of rehearsal, the types of rhythm will be mastered, and the melodic instruments will be feeling impatient. The pianist can now play a 4-4 march, and having exhausted that, a 6-8 march, to be followed with a waltz. When these have been well rehearsed

due attention being paid to building up the stressed phrases with extra cymbals or other instruments, you may ask the pianist to play one tune which has been already rehearsed, but after he has begun, to alter the time.

For example, it is not difficult to take a 6-8 tempo, and half-way through to alter it to 4-4, and yet again to 3-4. This will encourage the performers to listen for the changes, and also to one another. An orchestra whose players do not pay due consideration to one another's parts will soon fail to keep time, to say nothing of other deficiencies. Once your band is fairly started, and can play by following the pianist or the gramophone, you can proceed to teach your embryo musicians to read proper percussion band music. This is not difficult; the symbols for the various beats on the percussion instruments are usually expressed simply by single notes on one line. That is, although musical in appearance, these symbols have no real musical value apart from that of time. Time values are easily learned, and any pianoforte tutor or book will explain them. If you want a good book for this purpose the *Rudiments of Music* by Stewart MacPherson, at 1/6, will meet your needs most admirably. Music for the percussion band itself can be obtained from various publishers, and Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes, of 295 Regent Street, London, W. 1, will supply your needs, as will Messrs. Paxton of Dean Street, Soho, London, W. 1.

Once your performers have begun to read music, or even before this, you should not hesitate to let any member of the band who can play any wind or string instrument to bring it along in order to enrich the tone-colour of the band. Flutes, violins, accordions, even ocarinas and swanee whistles are all useful; or humming or whistling previously defined parts of the tune might be encouraged. The more novelty you can introduce, the more successful will your band be, and from this humble beginning there will emerge at least one or two more progressive spirits, who will want to take the band seriously and study music more methodically. This in itself will be a stimulus to the formation of a Club Orchestra.

The Listening Group.

If you gather a few club members round a gramophone and tell them that you are going to form a listening group they will probably ask only for "swing" music or one of its relatives. Tell them that you propose to help them to understand what they probably do not understand now about the less frivolous types of music and that it will at least be an interesting experience—as learning about anything that has been a closed book must always be—and you will obtain a group which is ready to learn if you will only show them the way.

In order to illustrate the vast difference in effect between the orchestral and the solo treatment of a composition, play "The Flight of the Bumble-Bee," by Rimsky Korsakoff, first as a piano solo (Columbia Record, FB 1779), and then contrast this with an orchestral version of the same composition (Record 9909, Sir Hamilton Harty's Orchestra). Point out that while the piano version may be beautiful, as compared with the orchestral treatment it is like a pencil sketch or an etching as compared with one of Turner's masterpieces. To whet the appetite for further knowledge of what the instruments of the orchestra can do it would be a good plan to purchase these two double-sided records: *Instruments of the Orchestra*, strings and woodwind, and brass and percussion—H.M.V. C1311 and C1312 respectively. These records have little snatches of well-known tunes played by each instrument of the orchestra, so that the varied tone-colours can be fully appreciated. They will arouse much interest, and when they have been played you can show the listeners pictures of the instruments. Messrs. Hawkes & Son, of 295 Regent Street, London, W. 1, publish an excellent book with fine illustrations, *The Orchestra and its Instruments*, published at 2/6; while small leaflets of a comprehensive nature are published at 1d. each by Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper, 11–17 Islington, Liverpool. Ask for their *Orchestral Chart*.

Now comes the fun of putting on a record and asking the listeners to judge of its orchestration after hearing a section of

the record. Play the section several times over until all the listeners are sure of its instrumentation. Suitable records to begin with are Roger Quilter's "Children's Overture," H.M.V. C2603, "Parade of the Pirates," H.M.V. BD378, and "La Siesta," H.M.V. C1814. Having, for several sessions, experimented with this kind of listening, I would advocate a gradual turning towards the various types of music. Explain that programme music, whose title indicates what we are expected to listen for (and such compositions are legion) is not characteristic of the serious composer, or at least of his best work. Music is lyrical as well as descriptive, and its tone-colours can create an impression without the need of an actual "picture" in sound. Thus, in listening, say to the overture, "Fingal's Cave," by Mendelssohn, no picture is evoked for no two persons, on hearing the composition, will receive identical impressions; more especially as in most cases none of the listening group will ever have visited Fingal's Cave. Frankly, I prefer to play this record, and all records of an impressionist nature, without disclosing their titles. You can ask the listeners what impression the music has conjured up; and even if the answers are a little bewildering, this is better than telling the listener what to expect, and thus prevent him from listening as intently as he might otherwise have done. There is an abundance of music to be drawn upon for such a purpose. Sibelius's "Finlandia" is obtainable on H.M.V. D.B.1584, which is a good record not for this purpose only, but also for listening to orchestration. There is such a wealth of good music available that I hesitate to name more than these as stepping-stones toward what may prove to be one of your most interesting and uplifting developments in respect of group activities of the more serious type. Among books to be recommended are:

The Appreciation Class, by Stewart MacPherson, pub. J. Williams, London. 1/6
The Pursuit of Music, by Sir Walford Davies, pub. Nelson.
Music Calling, by Cyril Winn, pub. Nelson. 3/6

Oxford Companion to Music, by Percy Scholes, pub. Oxford University Press.
Percussion Band from A to Z, by M. Bavin, pub. Boosey & Hawkes.

Composers and their Influence on Music.

It is possible for the person who is only slightly musical to give an excellent lecture on a composer. Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes publish at about 1/- some admirable biographies of great composers. These booklets contain a wealth of salient facts, interestingly expressed, with illustrations and, in some cases, anecdotes. Most of the music mentioned in the text can be demonstrated by means of gramophone records, and a really interesting evening's talk can be prepared from the book, and delivered in an informal manner, which may be more difficult if the talk is based on one prepared from the data provided by a volume of the history of music in general. A whole series of talks might be prepared to explain the origins of contrapuntal music, classical music, romantic music, and the modern period. A whole lecture could be given on the development of keyboard instruments, with records, from the harpsichord to the latest type of piano, the Neo-Bechstein, which includes a microphone and loud-speaker. Of records of performances on this piano I may mention H.M.V. C2567, Debussy; "Claire de Lune"—H.M.V. C2567—and two Chopin Preludes.

Here I might recommend two books by Percy Scholes: *The First Book of the Gramophone Record*, and *The Complete Book of the Great Musicians*, each published by the Oxford University Press. Also *The Columbia History of Music*, volumes one to five, each with eight records, and a special book, costing approximately 32/- per volume.

The Columbia Co. also publishes some excellent series of records illustrating the evolution of music with the work of various composers. Reference may be made to the Lecture Records at the end of their complete catalogue.

CHAPTER VIII

CAMPING

CAMPING is too often undertaken in an experimental spirit, and if the experiment is unsuccessful the practice is condemned and possibly never attempted again. This is all wrong; even the experienced camper plans and organises his outings, for there nothing is so prone to failure (for the most unexpected reasons) than a camping holiday. Resourcefully planned, with due consideration to weather and the type of camper, camping need never "go wrong," and it should be a vision of carefree joy for all, in spite of the extra duties that all have to share while living under a canvas roof, in an effort to live, for a time, away from the ready-made comforts of urban civilisation.

To uproot a group of youngsters from comfortable homes and transplant them for a period, or even only for a day or two (which is sometimes worse, for they have no chance to get used to things, and to settle down as they would during a longer stay), into rather primitive surroundings, is not a matter to be undertaken lightly, or without much forethought. For a first camp it would be well to take only those who are willing and capable of undertaking some specific task in the daily routine of camp life.

Assuming that you are really going to camp with only the bare resources that most campers prefer, you will be prepared to cook over open fires and to sleep in tents. A wise Leader will have had several rehearsals of building different types of fires and cooking simple dishes over them. Be sure that some of your campers understand the proper methods of fire-lighting, and the kinds of fires necessary for cooking certain dishes; make certain that all the campers know how to fold their blankets so as to make a warm and comfortable bed, that most of them know how to set up a tent, that matters of personal

hygiene are not left to look after themselves, and that your campers do not propose to run about the camp site unwashed, to the surprised dismay of any visitors you may have. Camping should not be a time of slackness and possible demoralisation as it can be under an inefficient Leader.

The prudent adult will make a few camp rules and see that they are understood and kept by all in the party.

All previous training can be undertaken in the form of an excursion. Let the party be divided into squads, some to carry the tent, some the cooking-pots, and some the provisions ; all of which may be carried on cycles if hiking is not possible at this stage. A Saturday afternoon can be well spent in this fashion, and once a beginning is made it is pretty certain that other such Saturday afternoons will be asked for. Such outings can be really good fun, and a splendid preparation for a successful camp, which will be enjoyed by all, irrespective of the inclemency of the weather. Remember that turf should not be burned in patches to reveal where your fire had been made each time. Cut out a square of turf, to be replaced on breaking camp, or else build up a brick base for your fireplace. Little points such as these make a great difference to the landowner's opinion of campers ; treat others considerately, and then you can always hope for permission to use the ground again if you wish.

Simple and sustaining dishes are all that are necessary. Plain but wholesome food is more appetising in the open air. For breakfast, oatmeal is easily prepared provided it is constantly stirred to prevent burning ; it is better if prepared overnight and should be stored in an air-tight tin to prevent softening ; a biscuit-tin will serve for this purpose. Bacon presents little difficulty to most amateur cooks, but your open fire must not be too fierce or the results may be scorched and unpalatable. A good mid-day meal, even in hot weather, is camp stew. Stewing beef can be put into a large pot, together with carrots and turnips, everything being cut into small pieces and well covered with water. Boil for about an hour

and then put in the peeled potatoes, some Oxo cnbes, or soup powders, and boil for a further half-hour. Do not put cabbage in the pot. If you want it, cook it separately.

Boiled rice (soaked overnight) must be stirred to prevent burning, over a slow hot fire, and if custard-powder sauce is well stirred in a few minutes before serving a commonplace dish, becomes really attractive. As you gain experience you might try this recipe. Fill a billy-can or dixie with layers of bread or stale cakes, interspersed with dates, figs, currants, or jam (according to what rations you have), and pour over this a custard-powder sauce. Put the billy-can, with its lid firmly fixed, into another large dixie of boiling water. You can use a clean bucket if you are short of utensils. A clean flat stone will keep the smaller billy-can from resting on the bottom of the larger vessel and avoid the risk of burning the contents. Boil steadily for about two hours (provided the water was boiling when you started), and the result will be a most attractive pudding, which is easily and most economically made.

A good book to help you with your camp cooking is *The Camp Book*, by Phillip Carrington, published at 1/6 by the Boy Scouts' Association, 25, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.

After a few preliminary exercises in the various jobs to be done in camp, including cooking the Leader will have formed a fair notion as to which members can be trusted with certain jobs. In the early stages it will be wise for the Leader always to supervise their work. No camper should be without a definite task. To be storekeeper is to accept a responsibility ; the storekeeper must not permit any furtive snacks, for the camp rations, while just enough, cannot be exceeded by any one individual without depriving other campers, and possibly disorganising the menus. Washing-up of plates, cups, etc., should be done by the owners, and at fixed times, but cooking-pots and pans and dixies are best washed by helpers, two different campers being selected for this task at each mealtime, or for the day, as may seem the better arrangement. The cooks should not have to

prepare their cooking utensils nor to clean them afterwards. In practice it will probably be found best to allow the cooks to say what they require, and for their orderlies to see that these articles, in spotless condition, are provided for use as soon as needed. A menu should be handed overnight to the cooks chosen for the next day. They can then plan their work in such a way as to prevent a last-moment scramble to get a meal served on time, and so that their preliminary needs can be communicated to, and provided by, their orderlies. All utensils provided for use in this way should be kept in the store tent until needed, but on no account should unwashed or otherwise dirty utensils be allowed in the store tent, where absolute cleanliness should always prevail. Similarly, no food should be stored in any tent where anyone sleeps. Hygiene must be meticulously observed in camping.

From the foregoing it may be conjectured that the orderlies are best selected overnight; even so, it may be better to allow all orderlies, including cooks, to carry on with their tasks until after breakfast. You will want water-carriers, who must maintain a good supply of clean water to the camp; while firewood must be collected and stacked under cover, lest rain or dew should make it unusable. The camp postman will collect and post letters, and may also deliver them as collected (presumably) from the local post-office or the postman. Camp sanitation will need attention, and here perhaps two orderlies will work under the direct instructions of the Camp Leader. While all these duties are necessary in a well-planned camp, and should provide excellent training, and no little enjoyment in themselves, they should not be allowed to dominate the camp routine to the exclusion of other activities. A wise Leader will plan each day so as to include general games as well as special games and excursions, while allowing a fair amount of free time for those campers who may prefer to go off on a ramble in small groups. It is an excellent plan to have a camp notice-board upon which a daily time-table may be pinned.

Aim at punctuality as regards meals: unpunctuality may lead

to discussion. Keep rigidly to the time-table, which all the campers have seen; they will appreciate the need of method and will plan their own excursions accordingly, so that their enjoyment should be quite unrestrained. But the Leader must not imagine that he himself must do all the work; his is the responsibility for seeing that it is done, but unless he wishes to spoil his campers, he will see to it that everyone has a fair share of work as well as of the pleasure.

Having established a taste for camping, so that regular week-ends can be arranged, you may introduce one or two new-comers to the joys of camping, even if they have had no opportunity of previous training. They will soon learn, once in camp, and your experienced campers will not mind initiating a few "tenderfeet" into the pleasures of outdoor life, even if at first they may seem rather helpless. Camping rubs off the sharp edges, and quickly establishes a wonderful cameraderie.

Remember that more character-training can be accomplished in camp than in any other club activity. Encourage your campers to perceive and appreciate the beauties and wonders of nature; and get them to ask questions about the trees, flowers, clouds, winds, stars, weather forecasts, animals, birds, fish and all natural objects. There is infinitely so much to be learnt, so much that is taken for granted, yet so little that is really understood and appreciated. And the learning will bring patience and understanding for the people and things that matter in the world of the city, and indeed, in the universe.

Mixed camping is a doubtful undertaking. The campers cannot possibly be mixed all the time, for hygienic arrangements and sleeping quarters cannot be easily organised in a mixed camp. In spite, too, of the confidence that may be reposed in the club members of both sexes, the dividing line is difficult to fix. Obviously the girls' and boys' personal sections will be taboo to the opposite sex, but wherever the boundary is fixed there will be surreptitious meetings and casual lingerings, which will upset the organisation of the

camp far more than the leaders bargained for. You must, of course, have two Leaders at least, one for the boys and one for the girls, and the two must work in the closest harmony, planning for as much mixed activity as possible. Meals can be taken together; games and excursions, and swimming can be enjoyed by all the campers; but how ever much you do remove the need for surreptitious meetings you will have to keep your eyes open.

The two different sleeping quarters should be as far removed from each other as possible, and "lights out" must be enforced at a recognised time by both camps; but even with such rigorous safeguards the two Leaders will have to go the rounds of their respective sections at odd intervals to make sure that all are settled in for the night, and that no lovelorn marauders are planning a nocturnal tryst. So much trouble has to be taken, so much responsibility is involved (for we are not dealing with mere children, but with those who will soon be our fellow-citizens), and our efforts are so liable to be misunderstood, that mixed camping which means dealing, in the main, with unknown material (for clubs are rather elastic in matters of membership rules and codes), is not worth the worry it will cause the conscientious Leaders of both sections.

Restricted to very small numbers it might be quite successful, and indeed has often proved to be so, but with large numbers, and as an annual affair, with the increasing difficulties of adequate and sympathetic supervision, it will not bear comparison with camping in entirely separate and independent camps.

Books to Read

Camping Standards. Published by the Boy Scouts Ass., 25, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W. 1,		4d.
The Camp Book by Phillip Carrington	Boy Scouts Ass.	1/6
Weekend Camps and Hikes	Boy Scouts Ass.	1/6
Notes on Camping	Board of Education.	1/-
Standing Camps by D. F. Morgan	Boy Scouts Ass.	2/6
Camp Cooking and Catering by J. T. Gorman.	Boy Scouts Ass.	2/6
Woodcraft by M. Woodward.	Boy Scouts Ass.	2/6

How To Know British Trees by Gurney.	Boy Scouts Ass.	1/-
Common British Wild Flowers by E. Waltham	Boy Scouts Ass.	2/6
The Night Sky	Boy Scouts Ass.	6d.
British Birds by S. Vere Benson.	Boy Scouts Ass.	3/-
British Wild Animals. by W. J. Stokoe	Boy Scouts Ass.	3/6

CHAPTER IX

TRAINING IN CITIZENSHIP

LOCAL pride is an outstanding characteristic of the human race. It is present in childhood, when it is seen in devotion to the school which is always superior to any other school; it expands in scope when the adolescent begins to follow the fortunes of his local football or cricket team, and as the years pass, and wider interests begin to appeal to the adult man or woman, civic pride develops in a greater or less degree.

The exile, whether far or near, often opens the local paper from home before the national daily; and in many industrial towns or villages it is a commonplace for workers who have come from an adjacent area to be referred to as "foreigners."

Surely this awareness of and pride in locality, ranging from the simplicity of the child's "My school is better than yours," to the superb cry of St. Paul: "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus—a city of Cilicia; a citizen of no mean city," can be utilised in the clubs to a worthy end.

A high conception of citizenship is one of the primary needs of the times, and it should be the highest ambition of the clubs to produce young men and women who are conscious of their citizenship—young men and women who are alive to the issues of the day—who are aware of social evils, who feel shame at the sight of a slum—who care deeply whether the children of their neighbourhood are well fed, well taught, and well housed, and who can appreciate the place of beauty, art and culture as factors in the national life. It should

even be a matter for congratulation if the members of the club should themselves become conscious of the deficiencies of the club premises—which are often only too glaring—since this reveals a growing demand for higher standards, and a refusal to accept makeshifts in an age which can provide the best.

Obviously the task of producing citizens who are fully conscious of their citizenship is not an easy one; indeed, it is one which the inexperienced Club Leader might feel unable to undertake. Yet, if he shirks this task it is unlikely that the club members will receive any help elsewhere. Home, the factory, the shop or office, the cinema, the church or chapel —these are the other influences which mould the outlook of our adolescents, and, apart from a small minority, who may be influenced by a good home or by a church, there will be nothing in their environment from which they can learn the meaning of citizenship.

In the club, citizenship can be learnt both indirectly and directly. Each club is a miniature community, and in learning to be good members of this small body the boys and girls are unconsciously fitting themselves for life in the larger world outside. Herein lies much of the value of the Members' Committee, on which they learn something of democracy in practice. The value of the proper election of committee members, with the full apparatus of nominations, ballot-boxes, and announcement of results, cannot be overstressed, and may help in after years to remove something of the apathy which characterises so many citizens at election times. Most club members have grown up during a troubled period when the elective system, apart from isolated cases of bye-election, has been suspended, so that the excitement and stimulus of parliamentary and municipal elections are unknown to them. Clubs can do something to fill the gap, and to keep alive an interest in "the government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

The Club Committee, once elected, should be a definite

reality in the life of the club. Its meetings should be held regularly, and the members should be properly summoned with a notice of the meeting and an agenda. Formal minutes will, of course, be kept and read by the Secretary, while the Treasurer will, as occasion demands, present the accounts. It is usual for the Club Leader to be present at committee meetings. Very often he will be present in the capacity of chairman, but this may be regarded as a temporary measure, to be adopted only until some member of the committee is seen to be capable of conducting the meeting. In voluntarily denying himself the position of chairman the Club Leader may perhaps find solace in the thought that by so doing he has inspired a boy with a zeal for the practice of democracy which may result at some later time in his becoming a local councillor.

Such ambitions may be aroused by inviting local councillors, magistrates, or local government officers to give a talk on their work. Most people can make their own job interesting to others. An academic discourse on housing would more than probably bore the club members, but if the Sanitary Inspector or the Council rent collector can be prevailed upon to talk informally about the question from his point of view, the subject immediately takes on flesh and bones. In the same way, the Probation Officer, or a Magistrate, can give a personal touch to a talk on the law, and the Town Clerk or a Councillor can reveal the human side of local government. Some clubs have become so enthusiastic about their local civic problems after talks of this kind that they have formed junior councils, based on the model of the town council, and have debated and discussed the subjects which are interesting their elders. In this connection wireless talks are frequently of great assistance, particularly those designed especially for youth. In some clubs wireless discussion groups have an important place in the club programme. Young people are great planners, and like an opportunity of putting their ideas into speech.

Useful connections can often be established with bodies

like the Workers' Educational Association, which in most districts has panels of speakers, who would be willing, if required, to give talks, ranging from ten-minute news-talks on current events to courses of twelve lectures on given subjects, all designed to appeal to young people and to stimulate discussion. Approach should first be made to the District Secretary of the W.E.A., who will probably be glad to arrange courses or talks for the club.

Few matters, if rightly employed, are more effective in developing a sense of citizenship than the stimulation of interest in local history. True appreciation of the living past —the growth of the town or village—the lives, struggles and achievements of the men and women who lived there in times past—should be part and parcel of the lives of those who form the present-day community. To feel kinship with those who toiled and struggled to develop the corporate life of the community is to feel an urge to continue the work which they began. Local history need not be an affair for the academically-minded only. Villages and town are teeming with unwritten stories of the past, many of them buried in the memory of the old people, and the best means of extracting them is not a knowledge of the dates of the monarchs of England, but an enquiring and sympathetic mind, the gift of imagination to clothe bare bones, and a genuine interest in the lives, labours, and romances of ordinary people. Given encouragement and direction from an enthusiast club, members will readily collect such stories, which can be discussed and entered in the club log-book, so that in course of time enough material will accumulate to make a valuable booklet.

If there is no one connected with the club who has any historical knowledge it should not be difficult to find someone locally who will take an interest in local history, and will be more than willing to air his pet subject in an interesting way. A local headmaster or teacher can usually supply some interesting facts about the early history of the district so as to make the story as complete as possible. Naturally there will be

tremendous gaps in the records, but the main object will be achieved if the idea of the community, beginning, growing, developing and expanding, is given actuality, and if the members begin to feel that they are part and parcel of a living organism to whose progress they themselves can contribute. For example, if, when they pass the local Methodist Chapel, they can see, with the eye of imagination, beyond the commonplace brick building of doubtful architecture to the men and women, often the victims of poverty and hard times, whose missionary zeal, inspired perhaps by a visit from John Wesley, triumphed over adverse circumstances, not only will their lives be enriched, but they will obtain a fuller conception of the idea of the community. And knowledge may lead to service.

Devotion to the community may be the democratic answer to the Nazi ideal of blind obedience to the State. The community means one's fellow men and women—the State, a blind abstraction. Service to the one develops the human virtues of kindliness, sympathy, helpfulness, understanding, and neighbourliness ; blind obedience to the other develops fanaticism, pride, intolerance, and that type of courage whose glory is tarnished by inhumanity. The club is the community in miniature, where the boy or girl can learn the spirit and practice of democracy. The wise Leader will see to it that in the club the members become aware of their membership of the greater community outside, so that when they take their full place in it they do so with knowledge of their obligations as well as of their rights.

CHAPTER X

THE OUTLOOK OF THE ADOLESCENT

WE all recognise the signs of adolescence in our boys and girls. It is not so much an age, but rather a phase when the

young person becomes too self-conscious about appearance and behaviour. The aping of the adult is now given full rein; the girl sallies forth with a handbag properly equipped with mirror, lip-stick, powder puff, and manicure set, which latter she employs at odd moments as though surreptitiously but usually where she can at least be observed by accident. Boys are now an attraction, and affairs of a mild nature are the very breath of her life.

To the boy in the process of becoming man, creased trousers acquire an importance that would formerly have been regarded as "cissy"; the style of hairdressing is considered, and with the aid of dubious preparations—pomades or setting lotions—often highly scented, the front of the head receives particular attention though the back is occasionally overlooked. Striking ties adorn a neck which is noticeably cleaner than of old, and a breast-pocket handkerchief adds a touch of smartness to our young man's appearance, which doubtless gives him great confidence when he saunters forth to appraise and be appraised. Now, indeed, he may have many conquests; their inconsistency, strangely enough, appears to bother him but little, for youth, we must remember, is a phase of expanding and developing horizons. But for this very reason it is an extremely serious phase, and if we are unkind enough to laugh when we feel that laughter is the only sensible reaction, we not only betray our complete lack of understanding and sympathy for the motives of his maturing personality, but we recede further and further from his consideration. He will erect a barrier of pseudo-importance in sheer self-defence against our unfeeling attitude, which may sometimes inconsiderately unmask the world of fantasy in which he lives at this period.

Now more than ever is the time when a sympathetic approach is needed, and the successful adult Leader mingles with his kindliness a firmness which earns respect from the young people whose lives he is hoping to steer in the right direction.

But the right direction is not always the direction which the

Leader wants to take. Let us remember that we are dealing with personalities, and they vary as do pebbles on the shore. As we stoop to pick up and compare pebbles, so must we stoop (in quite an unpatronising manner) and stay our own more regular pace if we are to assay the reality of the life that is striving to become something more than a casual glance can disclose.

Let us realise, then, that there are many directions in which young people want to go, and indeed must go. No matter how well-meaning we are, any attempt to thrust our own ideas upon another, any hope to convert him or her to our own ways of thinking, may be a colossal impertinence, and in the case of young people quite a wrong approach.

The growing pains of adolescence can be annoying to the adult, but they must be recognised for what they really are, and accepted as such. To the young mind their nature is not always apparent. The phases through which the youth passes are not recognised by him as phases, though they may cause him some perplexity, and even misgiving, but he is rarely aware of their existence as stepping-stones towards a mature stability.

The personal approach that is carefully unostentatious is undoubtedly the most helpful. Go out of your way to be a real friend; don't say you are a friend, and leave it to the youth to come to you when he may be desperately in need of advice or help. In any case, he probably won't come. The adolescent ponders deeply at times, and in his moodiness he may inexplicably as it seems—turn against the man or woman who once offered to help him, and who must (he admits to himself) know quite a lot, but who would only lecture him like a kid. Adolescent cerebration is not always reasoning; sometimes it is a revolt against things and persons who, because their nature or their attitude is not clearly defined, confuse him yet further.

As the growing mind changes—and one must remember that fickleness is a quality of the expanding outlook of youth—

so must your views appear to re-focus themselves if they are to help the youth to weather the tumultous seas of adolescence. He will still realise that you stand for certain ideas and principles, but that you are broad-minded enough to see both sides of a question.

Your treatment of one youth may be entirely different from your way of dealing with another ; and it is well to let each of them realise that your interest is individual, not general. You must try to win the confidence of a lad without seeming to pry into his affairs, for at this age youngsters can be very mistrustful, and any suggestion of inquisitiveness will damn not only your efforts but yourself in his eyes. For this reason a youth will often resent your paying a personal call at his home in order to see his parents, and if such a call is made in his absence, and he ultimately learns of it, he naturally begins to wonder why you called, and what you talked about. He may not betray his uneasiness ; indeed, he is more likely to camouflage his real reaction in his endeavours to learn what was discussed. Yet already mistrust has entered into your relations, and he is resentful, because he feels that it began with you.

After all, is it fair to the lad to call at his home ? Many a club member might be ashamed of his home, and that in itself may be an indirect tribute to your club. Some members may have a background of school-day misdeeds, of which they are now heartily ashamed, and which they are trying to dissociate from the new lives which they are now beginning to live.

Any Leader, no matter how well-meaning, who learns of such misdeeds, even though he never betrays his knowledge to the lad, will excite such uneasiness in the adolescent mind that any real mutual understanding becomes impossible. Leaders who ferret into the past are liable to lose members, and deserve to do so. We are not medical practitioners, requiring a case history before we begin to treat a disease, nor are we qualified psycho-analysts. If we love youth for its own sake and for the sake of the future toward which, by the

grace of God, we may be able to lead it, we have no need to probe into the past. If we do so probe we thereby acknowledge our own incompetence as Leaders, for our concern is with what is to be, not with what has been. If a member should tell us—as some will do in bursts of emotional confidence—of some misdemeanour committed at an earlier age, let us accept the confession only as a proof of the trust that evoked it. There are, most unhappily, persons who are puffed up with a sense of their personal virtue if they learn something discreditable about their protegé's past. No Pharisee can be a Leader. Let us rather concern ourselves with the youth as he now is, and with what he may become. Our problem, if there is any problem, is the youth now before us, not his past. Let us take an active interest in his tasks and hobbies, and help him to achieve his ambitions; but quite impersonally, or a suspicion of favouritism will adversely affect another member who may also be needing our help.

Gradually his trust in you will grow, and when you least expect it your advice may be asked on most of the deeper problems of adolescence. Then the lad who has something on his conscience will confide in you—his respect for you will make him *want* to confide in you. His confidence may be trivial, or it may be of a graver nature, but whatever it is, you will naturally respect it, and advise him to the best of your ability.

Men in the making—how quickly they seem to grow before our eyes, how quickly, too, they can be crippled for want of real understanding, and a companionship that is kindly without being sentimental, and does not condemn when it looks as though condemnation is inevitable. How vain we Leaders of youth can become! I wonder how much of our fine speeches, our help, and our leadership is wholly unstained by selfishness! It is so pleasant to see a boy or girl doing what *we* should like, to avoid doing what *we* know ought not to be done!

And how many of us are ready to wash our hands of a boy

or girl when he or she has forsaken the path we have indicated and scorned our well-meant advice! How poor we Leaders know ourselves to be in the depths of our hearts! No doubt we are genuinely anxious to extend a helping hand to those who interest us; but we should endeavour to be as impersonal as possible in our attitude, for the adolescent is often suspicious of an adult who plainly takes an interest in him. It will be well, therefore, to avoid the fatherly manner, and the patronising, avuncular tone. Unless you really are his father or his uncle, how can you expect the youth who is secretly baffled and wrestling for understanding, though outwardly he may seek to assure you that he knows all the answers, to accept such an approach?

In my earlier days I took such a fatherly interest in a lad; it seemed to me that he had no chance in life, so I endeavoured to give him a chance, and proceeded to spoil him. Suddenly, without explanation, he drifted away from me, saying that of course he respected me, but that I had no real right to do this and that, or to try and run his life for him. I reasoned with him in vain, and he drifted right away from me. Two years later (and two years in the later teens is really a lifetime) he wrote to me a rather bombastic letter in some respects; he had done this and that, and had enjoyed paddling his own canoe; it was such fun to surmount the waves that tried to swamp you; of course, he had been in difficulties, he knew what it was to rough it, and he confessed that he hadn't always done the right thing. But he enjoyed fighting his way. His letter ended, whimsically enough: "One day I shall know why I ever left you so suddenly. I often sit and think about it all and soon I know I shall have the answer." This letter was followed by others, each less bombastic than the last (perhaps because in my answers I never referred to his bombast, but told him rather that I knew he'd win through on his own resources) and becoming more friendly in tone. But that was one individual boy; others may have quite a different outlook upon life.

Another lad I met by chance in a railway carriage at Chatham.

He told me that he had just been discharged from Borstal to join the army at Woolwich. I offered to help him at any time, and was not surprised when one day I received a letter from a friend of his in the army who did need help. I saw this lad, who was unhappy as an army bugler, and he seemed such a cheery little fellow that I offered to help him with the three " R's " so that he might aspire to promotion. He used to come to my home in his periods off duty, always clean and smart: his buttons well polished, his finger-nails scrubbed clean, and his boots glossy enough to reflect his cheerful face. I soon learned how unhappy he really was, and after much consideration I saw his Commanding Officer. It was a futile interview, for the lad's parents were still living, and although they didn't want him and never helped him in any way, I realised that I, who was not a relative, had no right to interfere. In fact I was told that it was I who was making the lad unhappy, and that I had better refrain from further contact with him, or he would not grow into the good soldier that the army wanted him to be. Rather than add to his troubles, I reluctantly wrote him a farewell letter. He was drafted overseas soon afterwards, I learned, and knowing that he had good stuff in him, I hoped that he would be given opportunities to prove himself. Five years later I had a distressing letter from the head of a famous charitable organisation in London. In India a young soldier who was lying ill had appealed to them to trace me if possible. (I had changed my address in the meantime.) It was my friend the bugler. I wrote to him at once.

After that it was easy to maintain our correspondence and the soldier's letters were full of his efforts to save up enough to buy his discharge. When the great day arrived, and he was able to set foot again on English soil, he came straight to my home. At twenty-two he was in all respects the man I had expected him to become, and indeed knew him to be, for one has an intuition of such things. But he was a man with a troubled mind. He had seen suffering intolerable and evil in all its starkness, and with the thought of doing a little good he

had started a kind of missionary work in his overseas camp. He had ignored the jeers of the majority, and had felt that for the sake of the few whom he was able to influence his efforts were worth while.

But now he was free, and as he spoke to me of his trials, his failures, and his ambitions, I realised what a real man he had become. I have not seen him since then ; I helped him to get a job, and in his correspondence he told of his ambition to train for the Ministry. But the last letter which I received from him was rather surprising. He said that he would like to meet me once a year in London, to prove to me, by recounting what he had done during the year, that he was still aiming at something higher, and was still able to achieve it. But he felt that he had made so many mistakes, had so much to atone for, that he couldn't meet me too frequently. I knew of his mistakes, for on his return from India he had been almost distressingly frank, but I knew that if ever a man had learned the value of life through its bitterness, Reg. had done so. Well, in 1939 the war took him ; I know that if he is still alive he will one day let me know, and I am confident that many must be the better for his companionship.

Various types of misdemeanour in adolescents can often be traced to definite causes, but perhaps the majority of cases can be attribited to the thwarting of natural development. Adolescence is the dawning of self-assertiveness ; if untrammelled this may be disastrous for the community ; if damned it is more likely to be detrimental to the adolescent. That is, of course, a very broad generalisation ; but if you will always keep it in mind, sparing neither time nor patience, you may, if you act with courage, tact, and decision, win the undying respect of the youth whose life you have been privileged to mould.

CHAPTER XI

SEX—A SANE APPROACH

(A) BOYS

WHY do we make such a mystery of what is natural, and so make it seem unnatural?

Do we, as a community, ignore, as though no thought of it ever existed in decent minds (thereby suggesting that it is "indecent"), any other subject as we do this subject of sex? The very word appears to have an unpleasant sound for some of us; it has so often been understood as implying "sex appeal," though it may have no such meaning.

Years ago, when I was a raw beginner in club life, I was told by a boy member that he was going to see a certain theatrical production because it was a "leg show." I grew hot with prudish piety; told the boy that he ought not to go; yet when he asked me "Why?" I had no sensible reply to give him. I didn't help him; possibly I puzzled him; and I know that I suffered severe mental misgivings for failing to prevent the wrecking of the boy's soul! Make a mystery of a thing, and youth will try to solve it; furtively, as a rule. But why be mysterious? Why provoke the furtive approach? Bring into the open the idle smut that sullies some youthful minds, and its power withers. Do we all realise that this sort of talk is not a consequence of adolescence? Very often it begins very much earlier. It may gain in appeal with adolescence, but at an earlier age its main attraction is that of secrecy. Generally speaking, I would say that boys are not the worst offenders: girls are no less prone than boys to indulge in smutty talk, and even more so when they are herded together.

Don't let us gloss this over—but don't let us feel that we have to reform all the young people who come within range of our influence. Let us accept the fact that some, though not all,

of our club members will already have gone through a period of development which will have been seasoned with pornography. Others, by the grace of God, may be steered safely through treacherous waters. But all, we hope, will be the better for club membership, and the better—let us say this with a touch of pardonable vanity !—for our own Leadership.

Well, then, what are we going to do about it ? We must not assume that because we, the Leaders or adult helpers, act, speak, and try (not always with complete success) to think decorously, that our personal example is all that matters. To seem impeccable as a statue of Honour or Purity may damn our usefulness in the eyes of a youngster beset with doubts and fears. Let us be faultless, by all means, if we can, but let us prove by frank discussion that our life is what it is because we willed it to be so, and that impurity might easily assail us, indeed, may do so at times, but that we treat it with contempt and rebuff its impertinence. It is better to speak of impertinence than to assume a pained expression of horror, which really only proves how little we understand the whole matter. We may justly assume that certain of the facts of life are no mystery to the members of our club, but this does not mean that a frank, easy, unemotional talk to a group will not dispose of many morbid and erroneous ideas.

Perhaps a doctor could be prevailed upon to give a series of lectures on " The Reproduction of Life " ; but if no suitable person can be found, and if nothing is done, I feel that the Club Leader is admitting defeat in relation to a most important aspect of a club member's life. While it is a matter not to be entered upon lightly, while many Leaders will be reluctant to take a definite stand, and others will say that they simply cannot tackle the subject, I would nevertheless encourage the Leader to confront the problem as resolutely as he would wish to confront any other problem of leadership. It is not too difficult to deal with the question in a natural conversation with an individual boy ; and the approach leading up to a natural, yet more serious conversation with a group of young

persons is not so very different. If you make a point of introducing short periods of more serious conversation when you are talking to a small group of club members—conversation in which you select the subject and control the course of debate—you will build up your own and your listeners' confidence in yourself. You must, of course, take subjects that really interest you, as well as your listeners, or you will not speak with the authority and experience that alone will carry conviction. At the same time, you must never be afraid to admit that you are unable to answer a question put by a member. Not many Club Leaders will expect to be regarded as Admirable Crichtons, and a Club Leader who can cheerfully admit his failings is wise to do so. In all your dealings with youth utter sincerity is essential; otherwise you will not evoke a responsive note in youthful hearts.

Once I found a boy rather daringly showing some other boys a picture postcard of distinctly Continental flavour. Of course, on my approach an air of secrecy prevailed, and the uneasy whistling stopped when I asked the boy to show me the card.

"What for?" he asked.

"Oh, I want it for my collection," I said.

"You—you wouldn't like it, Sir," said the boy, shuffling uncomfortably.

"And why shouldn't I like what you so obviously enjoy? We're all brothers in this club, aren't we?"

The card was handed over, and I walked away amidst a silence which I imagine was broken very rudely when I was out of earshot. I knew that this would not have settled the matter, and I kept an open eye for more postcards. The ringleader (there was fortunately only one, though I think the method adopted would have been equally successful if there had been others) would either carry on, or would lie low for a while. He chose to lie low, but three weeks later I caught him again, with the same small group around him.

"Ah, more cards for my collection? Good!" and I took

them and walked off. Later on I asked the ringleader, in front the same small group of idlers, if he could let me have any more cards, or tell me where I could get them. "My collection isn't too good, and I'm sure you could help me out," I told him, while his followers stood sheepish and open-mouthed. I knew, or rather felt, that the ice was breaking, and two days later he came to me and asked me to return his cards.

"You know you don't want 'em, Sir. It's rotten, real rotten to go on like this!"

"Well, if I don't want them why on earth do you?" I demanded.

"Just to chuck 'em in the fire . . . I've finished with that sort of thing—you've taught me a lesson!"

The gusto with which he destroyed those cards—and, he did it, as I insisted, in full view of his former cronies—proved, I think, how ashamed he felt. The effect on his former gang was possibly even greater; though that only the boys themselves could know. Bring a furtive impulse to the light, and it withers; a boy who has been made to feel ashamed will often run straighter afterwards.

It requires a certain amount of courage to take such a bold step, but obviously no Leader will be regarded by his boys as depraved. Even in the most casual and apparently selfish club member there exists some spark of respect for the man or woman who leads the club in so friendly a spirit. Let the Leader assume an appearance of guilt, and the members will rise to defend him; among them the very ones who, in their defence of their esteemed Leader, will realise their own folly.

To deal with the harder trials of an adolescent's growing pains calls for greater candour, tinged with a sympathetic understanding that never wholly condemns. In London's dockland a boy of fifteen came to me and said, without preamble: "Sir, I'm going to be a father . . . can you help me?"

Those who know the slums of any big city will realise that such an occurrence is not unusual. But in this case the prospective father was a boy in my club, and I felt that here was a

personal problem. Who, knowing the circumstances of his environment, could blame the boy? And what useful purpose would reprobation serve at this juncture? Here, if you like, was ignorance and animalism over-developed and run riot; but here was a problem for me to solve, a young citizen almost wrecked before he had weighed anchor. The mental distress which I suffered I will leave to the reader's imagination. Some will say that there was no need for me to distress myself; I will merely repeat that the boy was one of my club members. Understanding friends, doctors and clergy, helped me to deal with the immediate problem. For the boy and the girl alike, life had been crude and stark, but even in such surroundings the consequences of failure to do the right thing may be brought home to a boy and a girl if the matter is handled comprehendingly and without sentimentalism.

A fatherless boy of fourteen who came from a moderately good home, asked me once if I could tell him how to distinguish a good girl from a bad one. This was in a Scottish city club. When he was asked why, at his age, he was going about with three girls, he replied that he knew that they might be after something rotten, but he was not sure of his ground. Such are the questions that adolescents will ask of an older person who, they feel, will give them a straight answer. They imply a mutual trust, and they cannot be put aside with a casual non-committal response. There are many books which give valuable help in this matter. Read them, and adapt their recommendations in the light of your own experience, but do go out of your way to give the most honest and therefore the most unbiassed advice to any adolescent who seeks it.

And remember, too, that sometimes they don't seek it, although they need it; for in the words of Joseph Addison:

> "Down the slippery paths of Youth,
> With heedless steps I ran,
> Thine arm unseen conveyed me safe
> And led me back to man."

It is difficult indeed to make young people stay their " heedless steps," but the Youth Leader who realises that his is a mission will not be discouraged by its difficulty.

Books Worth Reading

Youth and Sex by M. Booth — Allen & Unwin. 5/-
Mystery of Sex by Leslie D. Weatherhead.
Student Christian Movement Press. 5/-
Rovering to Success. — Boy Scouts' Assn. 2/6
Many booklets from the ALLIANCE OF HONOUR, 114, City Road, London, E.C. 1.
(These people can be of invaluable aid to Youth Leaders, and their booklets are extremely useful.)
Struggles of Male Adolescence by C. Stanford Read, M.D.
George Allen & Unwin. 7/6

(B) SEX TEACHING FOR GIRLS

Sex is one of the most difficult subjects in the world to talk about, particularly with young people. Yet young people badly need the help which only those more experienced in life can give.

In adolescence, with its rapid bodily, mental and emotional development, sex and its problems loom as large in a girl's life as in a boy's ; but because the whole subject is hedged about with taboos, and obscured by a sense of guilt, it is discussed only furtively, in corners, by little groups who become suddenly silent when an adult approaches. This ridiculous attitude to a subject in which everyone is vitally interested, and upon the right understanding of which so much personal happiness or unhappiness depends, is due almost entirely to the hush-hush policy of adults, for many of whom sex and sin are synonymous. Even where a less drastic view is held, the more " nice-minded " adult is apt to behave in an ostrich-like manner, because she feels—it is usually the woman Club Leader who is most diffident in this respect—that to talk about sex at all indicates an unbalanced mind. She has, of

course, some reason for this belief, because it does occasionally happen that when a Leader is deficient in reticence she sees every problem as a sex problem, and seems unable to keep off the subject.

To discover the right attitude—the happy mean—is not always easy, but generally speaking the best approach to the matter is to give information when it is obviously sought, either consciously or unconsciously. The required information should then be given naturally and simply. A youngster dislikes evasions and welcomes facts. Vague statements may spare the prudish blushes of the adult, but they will utterly fail in their purpose with the girls. The majority of girls of club age already know much more about the physical manifestations of sex, and the process of having a baby, than most of their Club Leaders knew at their age. To such girls evasive replies are merely funny. For the minority, who are genuinely ignorant, usually because their mothers are too shy or squeamish to be frank, half-truths do far more harm than good. " Sin " is certainly associated with sex, but the sin lies in the torturing of young minds because the adult fails in her duty.

When information is given it should be clear and concise, and as unemotional and objective as a description of the circulation of the blood, or the respiratory system. If the Leader is matter-of-fact the girls will adopt the same attitude.

If the Leader feels that her own knowledge is inadequate, or that she is unskilled in imparting it, she may decide that films illustrating the reproduction of life will be helpful. These, and the services of a trained lecturer, are quite easy to obtain. It would be wise, however, to inform the girl's parents first, either by a circular letter, or personal visits, or an invitation to see the films beforehand. Parents are usually very glad to be relieved of the task of sex-education, but sometimes they have religious scruples which the Club Leader should not disregard.

The Leader's task, however, is not completed even if every member is in a state of complete enlightenment as to the facts

of reproduction. With such enlightenment it is probable that a much healthier tone will prevail in the club, since once curiosity is satisfied interest in the subject becomes less important, but the wise Leader will feel that even so there is something more for her to do, and that is to interpret sex, to lift it to a higher plane than the merely physical. She will try to reveal to the girls what sex really is—a God-given urge whereby a man and woman co-operate with the Creator in producing life.

To "put over" such an idea, even in the most elementary way, requires a very light touch, and the ability, as in the case of religious teaching, to begin where the club member actually is, and not where the Leader thinks she ought to be. Spectacled earnestness, inspired by the unspoken and quite erroneous belief that most girls will "go wrong" if given half a chance, will achieve nothing. It is just as fatal to adopt a superior attitude as though to say: "I'm above all this sort of thing, of course, and any way it is all rather unpleasant." In any case, such an attitude is quite unnatural, and the girls will have no respect for insincerity.

The only person who will cut any ice with young people in any direction is the one who owns up to having shared in all the full and enriching experiences of life. The Club Leader who can enter into the spirit of the thing if one of the members enquires: "Was that your young man I saw you with last night, at the cinema, miss?" will soon find herself discussing on equal terms the sort of qualities for which she looks in a young man if he is to make a good husband.

There was wisdom in the reply which Miss Lilian Barker, former Head of the Girls' Borstal Institution, gave to a girl who was presenting a problem in behaviour. Said the girl: "Don't suppose you ever clicked when you were a girl, did you, miss?"

"Oh, yes, I did," Miss Barker retorted, "but the click went wrong!" It is the ability to start from the girl's level that counts.

Once an easy tone of conversation has been established on the subject of "boys," the Club Leader should be able to find many opportunities, in casual conversations, or informal discussions, of putting over her own ideas. Once the girls find that she is "sound" on the general subject of "boys" they will respect her opinions on allied subjects, such as marriage, and its basis in mutual love and respect for each other's personality, or jealousy, a subject which often engrosses them, since they think it rather grown-up to "make him jealous." They may be a little surprised if the Leader should declare that in her opinion there is only one person more despicable than the one who deliberately gives cause for jealousy, and that is the person who is jealous without cause; but such a remark, coming from someone whom they respect, will probably set them thinking.

Obviously the process of raising the general conception of sex to a higher level is slow and painful, and is not to be completed overnight; neither is there a definite formula. Frankness, friendliness, understanding, the ability to seize the right moment, unfailing tact, and the impact of one personality on another, are the means by which it is accomplished, and even then very little may seem to be achieved. The Club Leader may still feel, after years of trying to impart something of her own ideas, such as her conception of marriage, for instance, as "the union of true minds," is as remote from the members' way of thought as the Pole Star from the Equator. Nevertheless, the very fact that she has certain standards must have revealed itself in her conversation, and the influence of ideas on another person's mind is unseen and incalculable.

The problem of girls who are "boy-mad" is often a source of trouble in the club, and occasions much wringing of hands. Annoying as it may be, it should be remembered that such an attitude is not altogether unnatural. In primitive societies adolescence is the natural mating time, but with the advance of civilization economic reasons have tended to postpone the age of marriage. A boy in his teens cannot afford marriage,

so that the early twenties have now become the usual marriage period for the majority of workers, while in the professional classes, where a long period of training is followed by a long period of getting established, the average age for marriage is even higher.

Adolescence is consequently a period of great sexual interest, which society, economics and convention conspire, for obvious reasons, to frustrate. Moreover, such a veil of mystery and guilt is drawn over the whole subject that one sometimes wonders how young folk manage to reach maturity as unharmed psychologically as many of them seem to be.

The remedy, of course, for this undue interest in the opposite sex is to give it a healthy outlet in mixed activities. If the members of a Girls' Club tend to spoil their club night by slipping out to the boys hanging around the door, you may suggest that they should arrange for an evening's entertainment to which they can invite the boys, or, alternatively, you may invite the boys into the club for the last half-hour of each club evening. And when the boys come, let there be as much fun and light, music and gaiety as possible. They will probably want to dance, and there is no reason why they should not. It is far better for them to find an emotional release in dancing on club premises than in slinking up dark entries.

Incidentally, the expedient of tackling the problem of the " boy-mad " girl by inviting the boys in to the club may sometimes prove to be a case of entertaining angels unwares. A certain club which adopted this plan found that one of the boys was interested in singing, and had a natural gift for conducting. Before long, under his leadership, the hitherto rather uninspired and anæmic singing class, in which few of the girls were really interested, became one of the most popular of the club's activities. True, at the beginning the songs favoured were of the kind in which such rhymes as " you " and " blue," " heart " and " part," predominated, but a taste for something better developed as the singers became more ambitious, and the culmination came when the choir, now

composed of girls and boys, went off in a body to compete in the local inter-club musical festival.

CHAPTER XII

RELIGION IN THE CLUB

"THE trouble with this age," it has been said, "is, that it has mislaid the Devil." In other words it has no standards. Conduct is frequently a matter of expediency, and whereas the Victorians, for all their stuffiness and obtuseness, made every issue in life a moral one, the modern generation is not particularly interested in issues of any kind.

Two world wars have revealed to the common man that he has no influence whatsoever over events; his place either to do or die is allotted to him by the State, and in the uneasy peace which linked the two wars his manhood was sapped by unemployment, or the fear of it. If he were fortunate enough to have a job in peace-time the chances were that mass production and the specialisation of industry gave him no scope for his creative instinct. In war-time, despite the vital and overriding necessity of such tasks, the making of shells and implements of war does not impress the worker as a step towards building "Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land." It is small wonder that religion leaves the majority of the people untouched when human life simply does not seem to make sense.

Yet, in spite of this apathy, experience shows that most Club Leaders are deeply concerned about the religion, or lack of religion, of their Club Members. The subject likely to awaken the greatest interest and the keenest discussion at any gathering of Leaders is "Religion in the Club," and how "to get it across" to the members. Unfortunately, it must be confessed, such discussions are often disappointingly un-

helpful; few go further than a restatement of the problem. Very seldom is a solution offered.

The fact is that these young people of ours in the clubs baffle us. They seem so self-reliant, so mature, so apparently unafraid of life, that it is we rather than they, who seem in need of the help that religion can give. And it may be that when we, as Club Leaders, arrive at this conclusion, we have found the only starting-point for the solution of the problem; for religion in the club definitely begins with the Leader.

What exactly do we mean by "religion in the club"? Obviously the question is already answered for the club attached to a church or a chapel, and in this case it only remains for the Club Leader to work out in conjunction with the Members' Committee, and in consultation with the vicar, priest, or minister, the amount of time which shall be devoted to instruction, devotion, services, etc.

The type of club which really presents the problem of religion in the club is the "unattached" variety—the old scholars' club, the community centre club, and the large "godless youth centre"—the kind of club in which young people congregate who, as far as we can see, have never had any knowledge of religion, or, if they once acquired a few religious notions at their day-school or Sunday-school, have now completely forgotten them. With them the Club Leader starts from scratch; and it may be that after a year's leadership he will feel he is still at the starting-point. Fortunately, he is likely to be mistaken.

Religion is not a matter primarily of church attendance or pious words. It is a way of life—something by which a man lives; as young people are quick to realise when a personality in contact with theirs is guided by definite standards.

"Are you religious, Miss?" said a fourteen-year-old club member to the Club Leader: "because you never clout us when we quarrel!" The remark was crude but illuminating, and opened the way for further conversations on the subject of "what religion is"—conversations which were held, of

course, not in a hushed "church voice"—so devastatingly embarrassing and unnatural to the young, but so often inseparable from talks on religion. One often wonders how such a tone of voice *could* have crept into our talks with one another on such a vital subject, when so obviously Christ was the most natural conversationalist who ever lived. He, certainly, could not have talked about such homely things as lilies, and birds, and lost coins, and sweeping out rooms, in an unctious unsmiling whisper. Nor should we do so.

The practice of beautifying churches with stained-glass windows, depicting the apostles and saints in unnatural attitudes, and with far-away expressions, has done a great disservice, both to those depicted, and to religion generally. They have become, it seems for ever, remote and unreal. The saints were men of flesh and blood, leading the normal life of their time, with the common share of troubles, pains and joys; not etherealised beings who cannot conceivably interest young men and women, and who have to be spoken of in a special sort of voice. Imagine the doughty Paul, the man who "upset the world," being presented to the young as a stained-glass nonentity!

Religion in the club must be, then, perfectly natural. And here the responsibility for its being natural lies with the Leader. He can set the tone, and he can steer the happy mean between an overdose of piety (which will certainly "put off" the normal boy or girl) and too little regard for a matter which is of vital importance to the individual.

It follows, of course, that if he is to have any influence over the members of the club the Leader must himself have strong religious convictions, for young people are quick to note insincerity. This they will not tolerate, for they themselves are rarely insincere. Insincerity is a vice which is too often acquired, unfortunately, in later life.

At the same time, the Leader should not pose as being an *authority* on religion and theology. His attitude should rather be: "Let us look at this thing together": and it should be

apparent that he is willing, if necessary, to draw on his own experience for the help of those younger than himself. This is not always easy. The deeper the spiritual experience, the more difficult it is to talk about it. Yet it may be necessary, if some young soul is to find adequate help and guidance in the battle of life. This, perhaps, is where a Leader's chief function resides, as far as "putting religion over" is concerned, but he must, at the same time, beware of forcing confidences. To seize opportunities, gently and cautiously, whenever they present themselves, is the only effective way of dealing with such a tender thing as a young soul. It must not be roughly seized, but it will respond to what it recognises as sincerity and moral courage.

A Leader who can say, quietly and naturally, to a puzzled youngster, who is faced with a difficulty: "Have you tried praying about it? It is the only thing that gets *me* through," may help the boy more than he imagines. He will probably help him even more if he can go on to tell him how famous men and women have revealed the value of prayer in their lives; as, for instance, General Gordon, who "prayed his boats up the Nile," and Lord Kitchener, whose first words after a great victory were: "Somebody has been praying."

Again, if a club member comes to him cast down by some bitter disappointment, the wise Leader will surely try to help him to bear it manfully. He will perhaps tell the boy how he himself faced disappointment, and finally drew its sting by allowing it to strengthen his character through teaching him sympathy and tolerance. The Leader may go on to show how great men and women have dealt with their disappointments; such as the prophet Hosea, who was able, through learning from his own disappointments, to give the world a new idea of God, as all-loving and all-forgiving. He will tell how Hosea had a wife who deserted him again and again for an abandoned life, yet the husband, whose love never failed, in spite of his many bitter disappointments, always followed her and brought her back. Out of his anguish grew the new idea

that because *his* love, however often it might be denied and despised, had never failed, so much the more must God be loving and forgiving towards His children.

Such illustrations, and they are countless, will often help a youngster to endure his griefs and disappointments because the Leader has helped him, or her, to relate them to the universe, and has, in fact, connected them up with religion. Psychologically, the trouble has been made important.

To the adolescent, his sorrows and disappointments, particularly such matters as broken love affairs, are very real and tragic, and there may be times when he feels that he bears the weight of the whole world's woe. In face of such melancholy, it is idle to adopt the attitude of: "Cheer up my lad, you're young and there's just as good fish left in the sea as ever came out on land!" It may be quite true that in a few weeks' time all will be well again, but while it lasts the pain could be no deeper, and the Club Leader would do well to remember that this may be the first time the boy (or girl) has had an acute grief to deal with. It is important that he should be helped to deal with it courageously, and to make it contribute to the development of his character. It may be that from this adolescent grief, wisely dealt with by the Leader, will come the first stirrings of curiosity as to the ultimate meaning of life. A Leader who can help a boy or girl to relate such problems to religion, and who can "put over" the idea that religion, far from being an unreal and "Sunday-go-to-church" affair, is a definite relationship with a Being higher than ourselves, who is interested in us, and to whom our character and personality are of supreme importance—such a Leader has achieved success, even if the club roll of members never shows the slightest increase.

Obviously, however, a Leader cannot help his members if his own well be dry. More and more, as he progresses in his leadership, and realises the tremendous influence which he can exact over others, by virtue of his greater age and his position, the firmer will be his conviction that he must live up

to the highest that is within him. How he will do this is naturally beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is suggested that he may obtain some help, in his talks with club members, from the books mentioned below.

The type of talk which appeals to the average club member is the kind which comes straight from the heart, without cant and catch-words, or the jargon of old-fashioned religion. Phrases such as " washed in the blood of the Lamb," or " being saved," or theological terms like " the Atonement," or " grace," leave the boy or girl cold. What he or she really needs is an honest attempt to explain the purpose of life, the mystery of pain and suffering, and the meaning of the apparent injustices in the world.

The questions which agitate the minds of young people are of the type, " Is there a God ? " They will talk vociferously for hours on this subject, and with all the vehemence and cock-sureness of youth will often advance the most outrageous theories which would curdle the blood of the most enlightened theologian. But this profound certainty, which can be so irritating to the more mature, often masks a disturbing uncertainty about great issues, and the skilful Leader will be on the alert to interpolate the well-chosen word at the right moment. Informal arguments of this type, which will sometimes arise in clubs, provide an excellent opportunity for the Leader to study his members, and to get to know both their real outlook on life and the fundamental problems which trouble them.

Mention has been made, in another chapter, of the introduction into the programme of an Epilogue at the close of the evening. The value. of this cannot be exaggerated, although it should not be forced on the members. The introduction may occur spontaneously, as in the request to pray for a sick member. During war-time many clubs have asked for the introduction of an Epilogue so that those members of the club who are on active service may be remembered. But whatever the genesis of the Epilogue, members should be

given the opportunity to withdraw beforehand if they wish. It may well be that none will desire to do so, but if they are free to withdraw any feeling of resentment disappears, and the danger that the atmosphere of reverence may be destroyed by uninterested, hostile or unresponsive members is removed. Care should, of course, be taken that the hymn and the reading are well chosen, and in keeping with young ideas. It is often helpful to give a very brief explanation of the reading beforehand, or of the circumstances in which a hymn came to be written. Some editions of the Fellowship Hymn Book, a most suitable book for clubs, give a brief introduction to each hymn.

The prayers should be brief, and personal to the club, and offered with the utmost reality.

"Getting religion over" in the club is not an easy matter in these days, when paganism is probably more widespread than it has been for five centuries. Nowadays, it is not a case of young people quarrelling with the faith of their fathers. They do not quarrel with it because they do not know what that faith was, and they are not particularly interested. Materialism provides them with superficial satisfaction; it offers them variety and entertainment, and gives them nothing in the way of standards, to achieve which the development of character is necessary.

Here then is the Club Leader's problem. He is confronted with a group of apparently happy young pagans, with no religious background and no standards—self-sufficient and presumably uninterested. And yet he knows that a time will come when these young people will individually face problems in life which nothing but religion can help them to solve. He knows, too, that although they possess fine qualities of courage, loyalty, comradeship, and endurance, there is still one thing needful to achieve high quality in living. He knows, too, that a fine national and civic life can be built up only from individuals endowed with vision, who are conscious that life has meaning and purpose. What then can he do? The answer is two-fold. He must look to his own character,

because his religion is judged by that; and he must begin, from where the lad or girl is—not from where he thinks they ought to be. What was once written of a great teacher might equally well be written of a Club Leader:

> Mark Hopkins sat on one end of a log,
> And a farm boy sat on the other,
> Mark Hopkins came as a pedagogue
> And taught as an elder brother.
>
> I don't care what Mark Hopkins taught,
> If his Latin was small and his Greek was naught,
> For the farm boy he thought, thought he,
> All through lecture time and quiz,
> "The kind of man I mean to be
> Is the kind of man Mark Hopkins is."

Books suggested to help readers of this Chapter:

The Meaning of Prayer, and
The Manhood of the Master, both by Dr. H. E. Fosdick
(all of this writer's books are most helpful).
His Life and Ours, by Leslie Weatherhead.
He Upset the World, by Bruce Barton.

CHAPTER XIII

(A) THE "TOUGH" BOYS' CLUB

MANY things have to be considered in dealing with young people who are not only without any interest in cultural values, but who have not hitherto had any opportunity of understanding what they are. Youth Clubs cater in many cases for those who have left school, and in some cases it may be found that few of the club members have ever attended any type of evening school.

This is the position which often prevails in industrial areas, where dead-end jobs abound, and youth has little personal

encouragement, and therefore no inclination, to enter any sort of educational byway. The home is always the mainspring of a life, and in too many cases the mainspring has long been unwound or broken. In large families living under adverse conditions of poverty, bad housing, and indifferent health, scholastic achievement receives little encouragement during school days, and certainly none afterwards. At school the children often fall automatically into groups; those who like a subject, those who are indifferent to it, and those who simply cannot grasp it, or, at least, find it perplexing and difficult. Broadly speaking, the average teacher gets along easily enough with the first group, does his best to stir up the second, and often more or less ignores the third. Members of this third group are fortunately in the minority, but unfortunately many of them are conscious of being neglected, and are consequently liable to develop an inferiority complex, coupled with a hatred of the subject which perplexes them.

In clubs situated in the more unfortunate areas this type of youth is very prevalent; indeed, the majority of your club members may be of this type, and the club has to make up, if it can, for the deficiencies of the school-teacher's influence over his worst pupils.

To lead the members of the clubs toward what might be classed as cultural subjects sounds so formidable a task that few Leaders appear to attempt it. But if you make up your mind that the rougher elements in the clubs would never have the patience to listen to any sort of cultural address—for example, a talk on the arts; or some technical subject—you are simply sitting down on the job. Yet to announce a lecture on the Drama or Music, and (even though you have a good attendance) to expect immediate interest, and a request for further talks, is an attitude unworthy of an understanding Leader. It is asking too much of the audience and the lecturer, and it simply will not happen.

You must start from a level which your members can understand, and do not feel that you are desecrating an art in

so doing; it is better to begin humbly and lead up to better things than to spoil everything at the outset by beginning where *you* think your members ought to be. Such an elementary approach is difficult, of course, but not insurmountably so. Remember, impatience and hostility to a subject will give you little time to introduce it and to whet the listeners' appetite for more. Fifteen minutes is perhaps the most that should be allowed for this, and you should intersperse your talk with illustrations; above all, do not announce the talk as a lecture. Perhaps the subject could be introduced by asking a casual question at a meeting. You could ask suddenly:

"Can anyone tell me what is the real attraction of So-and-So?"—mentioning a well-known film star. You will get many different answers, and by way of settling an argument you might give your own views, and then suggest calling in someone else to give theirs. This outsider might be the local cinema manager, a well-known shopkeeper, a doctor, or a minister. Ask them to talk informally on "My favourite screen star." The cinema is the most popular form of entertainment to-day, and should be a good starting-point for a gradual approach toward an interest in the drama and the art of acting. Such talks may be periodical, becoming a regular feature, which will appeal to certain members. The interested group will perhaps be small, but it will soon become established, and you might then ask members to enact little episodes that appealed to them in a recently-seen film (as yet without dressing for the part, and in quite an impromptu manner). Incidentally, you will probably find that the love scenes will not have any great appeal for the non-intellectual types. If carefully handled and planned progressively, the subject of the drama in general can be introduced (at first in the most elementary fashion), and once interest is aroused ability may emerge and be developed.

And similarly with music. You will find that the club members like dance music, "swing," and the like. Start from this basis, and lead them towards argument, discussion, and listen-

ing to records of popular tunes. A discussion on "What is Swing"? might lead up to another on: "What is Classical Music"? Get a local musician who knows his subject to set the pace and give musical illustrations, proving to listeners that what they regard as classical music probably is nothing of the kind. Talks on old musical instruments, on the evolution of the piano, with gramophone records, on the importance of the musical background to films and plays, can be compressed, with care, into fifteen minutes. Succeeding talks will follow automatically if technicalities are lucidly explained, and an informal delivery is adopted.

An initial interest in art might be aroused by giving a member the task of cutting letters out of scraps of linoleum. Such letters might be cut in the first place from newspaper-headings or the like, pasted on to the linoleum, and then cut out with a sharp knife or chisel. The resultant letters might be glued on to a wooden backing, and with the aid of an ink pad they can be used to print the headings of notices and other club announcements. Always aim at making a craft useful in the club, as it will arouse a greater and sustained interest. Such elementary beginnings may lead to cutting out shapes in wood for toys and models, or silhouette designs for decorating the club premises and many other purposes. Provoke a discussion of a suitable illustration in one of the pictorial magazines, asking what it depicts, what it suggests, what mood or emotion it arouses—i.e., happiness, anger, sorrow, fear, excitement, etc. Gradually, as in all such cases, lead up to pictures of recognised merit, even using the facsimile reproductions in the handbooks or catalogues of the Royal Academy and the galleries of art in various cities.

Metal-work, plaster-moulding, and general craft work will come along in their natural stride if they are made practicable, and they will afford youth opportunities for the powers of self-expression which are inherent in all of us, but are often deeply buried under the apathy and inertia due to an unfortunate environment.

CAMPING HAS ITS DANGERS.—Camping is often regarded by youths from squalid surroundings as an outlet for their destructive tendencies; trees must be cut and injured irremediably, fences broken, and a trail of litter and kitchen refuse left to mark the spot for a long while after the camp is struck.

Into the wide open spaces the boys come as hooligans to run riot. Tents permit of continual gambling (though canvas is by no means sound-proof), while swearing and other undesirable habits may be indulged in without restraint. The campers loaf about, forage for food, and put up with any sort of "grub," and even forget to wash until it is time for their evening visit to the local ale-house. That is what these lads would like to make of camping. I have seen such things actually happen while an inexperienced Leader and his assistant stood by and did all the work, lest the lads should walk off if they were asked to do anything useful.

A courageous Leader will tackle such problems as they arise. If he has to take untrained lads to camp let him give each one a simple job, and see that it is done, and according to the manner of its performance he will give them another job, of greater or less importance. Boxing and running, swimming and hiking, tree-felling (where appropriate!) will tax the boys' physical strength so that the spirit of destruction will be safely sweated out.

As in all matters of Club Leadership, the Leader must show strength and determination to obtain improvement. Any club member who detects in his Leader's character a tendency to stay "put" or merely jog along will not even try to jog along with him.

In most industrial areas, where clubs might be expected to do their most useful work, the environment of the young member is hardly such as to provide him with a "design for living." He knows little of life but communal life, and that at its worst. Overcrowded homes, with a paucity of bedrooms, and even beds, prevent privacy of any sort.

And adolescence is the one period when privacy is most needed. Cleanliness of body is not always as possible as it should be, and unless cleanliness is made a habit, uncleanliness of the general outlook warps the mind and vision, so that a Leader's task is made doubly difficult. The home often offers so little that the factory or office affords more companionship and greater comfort. Most factories are well lighted, heated, and ventilated, and their recreation rooms and canteens offer a considerable attraction to the young worker, who knows very little of comfort and cleanliness outside the sphere of his work.

Remembering this and the urgent need of the club member who may not be working in such comparatively favourable surroundings (and messenger boys and shop assistants, to name only two classes of workers, assuredly do not), the club should offer its members comfort, thereby raising their standards. Washing facilities should be available in the club, and members who come in straight from their work must, as a matter of habit, clean themselves before taking their place in the little community.

The club canteen should teach cleanliness; and boys can learn to run a canteen, and even to cook for it, quite as efficiently as girls. A rota of workers in the canteen would ensure that every member would learn to accept the responsibility for cleanliness, though a prudent Leader will keep a vigilant eye on those who are possibly learning to be clean for the first time. Matters of health and physical abnormalities or disabilities must be taken into consideration when allocating jobs to members, but these points should never be allowed to obtrude themselves so that the member concerned, or even others, become aware of such consideration. Allow each member to retain his own personality, and approach him or her through that personality. Allow the club to acquire a personality of its own, which may be a strong impersonal influence in the lives of its members.

(B) THE "TOUGH" GIRLS' CLUB

FEW beliefs are so painful to unlearn by the young in experience and earnest in intention as the conviction that mankind, in its hours of leisure, is yearning to imbibe culture, and enjoy orderly and disciplined recreation. It is strange that this fallacy should persist in the teeth of abundant evidence to the contrary.

Many a young Club Leader has embarked on her job with almost pathetically exalted intentions of doing good to her adolescent neighbours, only to find that these young neighbours have little or no desire to allow good to be done to them. Usually, after a brief period, one of two things happens to the Club Leader. She either falls by the wayside, and the club world is poorer by a Leader, or she goes through a painful psychological conflict, as the real and unwelcome facts are brought home to her; and from this conflict she gradually emerges, clear-eyed and humble, ready to accept human nature with all its limitations; the stronger for her bitter experience.

There are few harder testing grounds than the "tough" club.

A "tough" club is difficult to define in exact terms, though all Leaders know when they have one. A general air of the lack of any kind of discipline—little respect for the club property—noisiness—a trick of running in and out—squabbles amongst the members—restlessness—the habit of gathering into small gangs; some or all of these characteristics appear in the "tough" club.

A poor home background is nearly always the chief cause of the trouble. All Leaders of such clubs can tell of homes which are no homes at all in the spiritual sense, and often hardly so in the material sense.

One example will speak for many: In a girls' club on a new housing estate, built to rehouse slum-dwellers, and very

well known to the present writers, there was a particularly "tough" girls' club. The membership was about forty, and the club met twice a week. Nearly all the members came from big families, and were mostly factory or laundry workers, and while it would be untrue to say that all the homes from which these girls came were unsatisfactory, there were very few which approached the standards of family life necessary to the development of a satisfactory personal life.

The Leaders who in succession led the club had no easy task, and one or two lost heart after a few weeks. Those, however, who stayed the course realised that the experience had been well worth while because whatever success they achieved was due to their own efforts at understanding the individual. For the "tough" club is essentially a club of individuals; of individuals who, because of the lack of a good home background, or because their parents are living undisciplined and uncontrolled lives, have themselves little or no conception of self-discipline or self-control. The club, to them, in the first instance, is a place where they have room to let off steam after being confined at their work all day; they cannot relax at home, because their homes are crowded with younger brothers and sisters. They come to take, and have no conception of giving. Sometimes they will even resent having to pay their small subscriptions, and they will join in communal activities only if and when they are sufficiently interested.

Such was the club in question—typical of very many. From the record of its difficulties four examples have been selected at random, to illustrate the sort of problems that presented themselves and to suggest how and with what success, they were handled.

Elsie was one of five children, each of whom had a different father. Elsie and her sister were boarded out with a family consisting of a mother of doubtful history, who had a number of sons and daughters rather older than Elsie, two of whom had illegitimate babies; which, incidentally, Elsie zealously mothered. Elsie's own mother had long ago abandoned

her older children, and was living in the native quarter of a seaport with a coloured man. Elsie herself was an attractive girl, with a very friendly disposition, but given to violent outbursts of temper and aggressiveness. Her great delight was to try to shock the Leader with choice and lurid language. The Leader, wisely, always appeared immune to shock, and quietly and persistently sought to win Elsie's confidence by treating her as a grown-up person. She encouraged her to talk about her job, and her boy friends, of whom she had quite a following, and of whom she was always willing to chatter.

Fortunately Elsie had two outstanding virtues, which ultimately won the day. She had a sense of humour, and a great sense of loyalty. After, and sometimes during, a particularly violent outburst of temper or bad language, which added much to the amusement of the club, but nothing to its discipline, the Leader would catch Elsie's eye and twinkle humorously, and the next moment the storm would subside in a laugh.

Elsie's sense of loyalty probably grew out of her unrecognised craving for affection, and the security which this brings. Denied both these essentials through her unusual home circumstances, Elsie gave unstintingly of devotion and loyalty to a Club Leader who offered her these things; and because she found the Club Leader in the club, she was loyal to the club too.

A second member, Gladys, suffered from extreme moodiness, and was sulky by nature. She was definitely one of the "difficult" members, who could make or mar a club evening by her good or ill temper. Strangely enough, although she was so difficult, she had a personality strong enough to command a following in the club, and she was always elected to committees. This gratified her vanity, but if it made her slightly less difficult it by no means "cured" her. Nor did it help much when she was elected secretary. On one occasion, having been persuaded with difficulty to attend a committee

meeting, she sat with her back to the table and read the minutes over her shoulder.

Gladys's trouble, like so many more, lay in her home. One evening she came to the club with a tear-stained face, which she had unsuccessfully tried to repair with rouge and mascara. Soon the whole story was told to the Leader, who had tactfully drawn her aside on the pretext of needing help with the register. Gladys, a fully grown girl of sixteen, earning her own living, and possessing a newly-acquired young man, had been " belted," she didn't know why, by her father. Like her six older brothers and sisters, and several younger ones, she had been brought up on " beltings " by a father who was subject to ungovernable tempers. The older brothers and sisters had solved their problem by marrying early, and the mother, now thoroughly cowed, kept out of his way. Gladys's crying need was sympathy and understanding, and a constant ministering to her sense of importance, which her father as constantly frustrated. The Leader realised this after hearing the " confession," and Gladys was helped to become less difficult by being entrusted with a number of little jobs in her capacity as Secretary.

A third member, Nelly, was wild and undisciplined, and seldom wanted to do what others were doing. During a " Keep-Fit " class she would refuse either to join in, or to go into the " Quiet Room," preferring to make herself a general nuisance by calling out ribaldries to the girls in the class. Unlike Gladys, however, she had no following in the club, and the other girls, apart from an occasional " Shut up," ignored her.

Part of Nelly's troubles was an irresponsible mother, who was always out, solacing herself for her husband's absence in the Army, by haunting public houses and going to dances. Nelly was left to mind the younger children, but as the mother cared little whether this was done well or ill, Nelly never missed attendance at the club, even though she did little but make herself a nuisance. At least, such seemed to be her only

reason for attendance, until a new dramatic teacher appeared, who interested all the members by a wealth of dramatic exercises. To everyone's surprise, Nelly proved to possess some dramatic talent, and although she lacked the application and ability to learn a sustained part in a play, she derived great enjoyment from giving the club a spontaneous exhibition of a woman waking up to find herself locked in a prison cell, or of a girl receiving a letter containing unexpected news.

Gwen was another colourless member, who had only a negative influence on the other members. She too came from an unsatisfactory home; her parents drank heavily, and had no control over a large and ill-assorted family. Gwen's chief preoccupation in life was boys; she and a friend used to drift into the club, half-way through the evening, to discuss them in odd corners. They presented a pleasant but immovable front to all attempts to persuade them to take part in common activities. Then, one evening, as the "Keep-Fit" teacher was ill, the members decided to give an impromptu concert amongst themselves. There was no lack of volunteers, some of whom quarrelled for precedence, and each in turn mounted the stage, to sing, or do a tap-dance. To everyone's surprise, amongst the volunteers were Gwen and her friend, who proved to have an aptitude for crooning. Suddenly they felt that they were part of the club, and afterwards few evenings passed on which the two girls did not at least join in the singing which was a feature of the club's activities.

The "happy endings" of these stories of the club lives of these four girls—Elsie, Gladys, Nelly and Gwen—hardly reach the high standard demanded by the readers of Victorian moral tales. Nothing spectacular happened to them. It would indeed have been a miracle if it had. At the end they remained essentially the girls they were at the beginning, because the bad home influences remained the same, and four hours' life in a club once a week could do little to counteract them.

Nevertheless, the club was fully justified. Each of the girls had had a definite experience. Probably for the first time

in their lives, and almost certainly for the first time in their adolescent lives, someone had cared for them sufficiently as individuals to attempt to understand them. In other words, they had enjoyed the rare experience of being loved, in the non-sentimental, unemotional sense of the term. For once they had found someone who accepted them, saw the best in them, and gave them the sense of security which youth so desperately needs. Here at least was something permanent in a restless, changing world.

Elsie's mother might leave her to the casual care of a foster-mother who did not particularly want her; Gladys's father might "belt" her when the mood was on him; Nelly's mother might be out all night, as she frequently was; and Gwen's parents could make the house unbearable by their periodical drunken squabbles; nevertheless, the club was always open on Mondays and Thursdays, and Miss X, the Leader, was always there to be talked to if you felt like it.

And it never occurred to the Elsies and the Gwens in the club, of course, that Miss X had her own dreams, in which she saw a well-organised club, with all its numerous activities running like clockwork, in which the Elsies and Gwens took part happily and promptly, so that all went merrily as a marriage bell.

In her better moments, however, when Miss X faced the reality, she knew that there is no golden rule for dealing with the tough and the difficult. She might, of course, attempt the old dodge of turning the poacher into a self-respecting game-keeper by giving him a job to do; and this quite often succeeds. But the whole process of turning a "tough" club into a model one, even if it is ever completely successful, is a very slow one, and it always depends in the last resort on understanding the individual. Activities, of course, there must be in a club, or chaos would reign, but the activity is made for the individual, and not the individual for the activity.

All clubs, and "tough" clubs particularly, are, like the building of housing estates, the spread of education, and the

development of social services, part of the process of civilisation and the general raising of the standard of life. Nearly all that has been achieved has been done within living memory, and certainly within a century. Youth movements are only in their infancy, and " tough " clubs are consequently inevitable. Nevertheless, they are fully justified, because in them young people who are the victims of a very imperfect industrial system, and usually of more than indifferent home conditions, can find a refuge where they can be themselves, and come into contact with personalities who, because of happier circumstances, have gone a little further toward mastering the art of life.

CHAPTER XIV

LOOKING AHEAD

THE Service of Youth, though still in its infancy, is now passing into a period when it is acutely self-conscious. Its juvenile essays, which delighted the interested onlooker, are giving way to occasional attempts at exerting its own will, and the fond parents are coming to realise that they must begin to plan for the future—a future which will not only embody their own ideas, but which will also take into account the standpoint and the predilections of the lusty infant itself.

To begin with, modern youth shows quite plainly that it has no time for the amateur or the second-rate. If P.T. or country dancing, or drama, or what you will, is to be a club activity, then it must be taught by an expert. In other words, there will be no enthusiasm unless there is respect for achievement. For this, present-day education, despite its deficiencies, is responsible. At school the child is taught by experts—teachers with special training in their various subjects—and unconsciously the scholar adopts a high standard. He does not realise that he has acquired this high standard until he

comes to the club and finds his favourite school subject, now a club activity, perhaps, taught by an amateur. Instead of going forward he finds that he has gone back. He is unconsciously asking for stronger meat, and is put instead on a diet of bread-and-milk.

If youth organisations are to retain their hold on the adolescent they must offer the best, and to do this they must have skilled and trained instructors provided by the Local Education Authority or some other body. It is false economy to starve a vital section of the population, particularly a section which has been taught to appreciate better things, for then a sense of frustration is added to the feeling of under-nourishment. And frustrated, mentally and spiritually under-fed citizens are a menace to the community.

One answer to this will undoubtedly be the raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen. Yet this will only postpone the problem of two years and will, indeed, make it even more acute. The ability to appreciate the expert in any and every subject, together with the greater mental alertness due to two years' extra school-life, will cause an even greater, though unexpressed, desire for a continuation of a similar standard of instruction.

The same attitude will also apply to the equipment of a club and the premises in which it is housed. There is surely something ludicrous in educating a child in a modern, well-designed, well-equipped and well-built school, and then, when he has presumably been "conditioned" into accepting and appreciating good and fitting surroundings, condemning him, on reaching adolescence, not only to the general unloveliness of industry, but also, in his leisure time, to the ugliness and dreariness which characterise so many of our clubs. It is no uncommon thing for a club to be housed in the condemned and out-of-date buildings which have been replaced by the modern school attended by the great majority of the club members. Again, they have gone back rather than forward.

It is, of course, inevitable that a movement which has

developed largely in war-time should have to endure the makeshift conditions of exceptional times, but this should not mean the acceptance, as a fundamental principle, of the notion that anything is good enough for a club so long as it keeps out the wind and the rain. One of the chief aims of a club is to train young people in the art of citizenship, and citizenship involves an appreciation of the best which man is capable of producing for any particular purpose. When conditions allow, youth clubs should be built *as* youth clubs, and should be as much a part of the architecture of the town as the schools.

This is not a plea for the colossal and pretentious. Too much attention has been paid of late to mere numbers, for the Age of Statistics is upon us. The adolescent, like the adult, best finds his level in the small group. He will learn the art of living much better in close contact with the man or woman of character, a contact which the small group allows, than as an unregarded unit in a large crowd. The large crowd has its uses on occasion, but it rarely or never produces worth-while ideas while functioning as a crowd. This it can do only when it splits up into small groups.

Education is a life-long process, and no age-group can be put into a water-tight compartment. Childhood gives place to adolescence, adolescence to manhood and womanhood, and there is no hard line of demarcation between the ages. The future will probably see a general realisation that from the cradle to the grave there must be provision, according to capacity and natural predilection, for the citizen to develop his mind and soul to the full. Leaving school will merely open the gate upon new experiences.

The provision of "People's Colleges" based on the Scandinavian model, where one person in four avails himself of the opportunity of attending such a college at some period of his adult life, will probably be a post-war development in England. Experience has proved that the best age for supplementary education is the early twenties and onwards. Since the school-leaving age will undoubtedly be raised to sixteen,

this implies that the later 'teens, while getting used to the world of industry, will find that the needs of their leisure time will be met by the youth organisations.

Much, then, will be expected of the clubs. On them will rest the responsibility of training the youngster in the right use of leisure, of keeping up the standard of training and achievement set in the school, and of preparing the way for opportunities of self-development in the future. This by no means implies that the future will lie with the pedants and bluestockings. A full life does not depend upon book knowledge, but rather upon the complete development of innate gifts and talents, and the recognition that the only real wealth worth striving for is—character. To realise this is to make sense of life; and so long as youth organisations help their members to grasp this truth they will more than justify their existence.

CHAPTER XV

AFTERTHOUGHTS

WHEN this book was being planned its context was outlined by one of the authors in a letter to one of his former schoolboy pupils. This lad had maintained a constant correspondence after leaving school at the age of 14, and many have been the view-points and problems discussed through the post!

He was a typical London lad, who soon moved to the East Coast, and there helped to develop local interest in matters akin to what we now regard as coming under the heading of "Service of Youth" activities. Early in 1939 he enlisted, and then, to quote his own words, he "began to think more than ever on matters that formerly were taken rather for granted."

The following extracts from some of his letters are inserted here just as he wrote them, and are collected from roughly eighteen months' correspondence previous to May 1943. Some of his remarks have a direct bearing on parts of the book, as he had read rough notes of three chapters.

The authors, feeling that the viewpoint of this young man may be of considerable interest to readers who wish to lead Youth in the most useful manner, therefore make no apology for the structure of this chapter.

Views on "Adolescence"

"I'm just looking at some notes I made the other evening when sitting in front of the bunk fire—unfortunately I have written them in a careless sort of shorthand and can't read it all! I gather though, that I was trying to get my mind back to my days of 16–18 years or so, to see if my own impressions coincided with those you lay down in your chapter on Adolescence, and on the whole, I think they do. You, of course, are talking from your wide experience of young folks of all kinds, and I have only my personal feelings as a guide, but I guess we all are much the same at that age. I do believe that a guiding hand just then, such as you are trying to provide, can do an immense amount of good. I never had one—not in the sense of these Youth Clubs anyway, and I'm wondering whether the feelings of wanting to do something, create something, be something that came to me later, say 21 onwards, might have been fostered earlier and turned to that much better account.

"I see the first few years after school leaving, particularly if that was achieved at 14 as in my case, as a period of rejoicing at being free of the discipline of the schoolroom—the setting out to have a good time, to make the most use of freedom (and coming perhaps a cropper in the process); one doesn't, at first, realise that you have only exchanged one sort of discipline for another, the even more rigorous discipline of holding a job down—and it's a nice calculation, depending mainly on the individual, as to whether or not he really has gained or not! Personally I always thought that I had—even if I hadn't a series of regular holidays to look forward to, but only a week or fortnight a year, and work which took me considerably later into the evening than the 4 p.m. train from school! Anyway, I jogged along quite happily, working when I had to and using my spare time for my own pleasure, without serious thought

that now I was out in the world and should really do more with my life than just that.

"Can your Youth Clubs bring to the members the realisation that there are a lot of things to do, and that time spent in striving to fit oneself to do them is time well spent? Perhaps I'll put it in a more personal way: Can you bring to the minds of 16–18-year-olds what I am just beginning to find out for myself at 24? I feel that perhaps the times I lived in at the former stage may have something to do with it. Subconsciously at first, and later in even increasing certainty, I think the idea has always been at the back of the minds of those who grew up with me, that one day 1914–1918 would occur all over again. The 'eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow . . .' idea was a grim background for us, and I have no doubt that it contributed largely to any tendency in us to use our first years out of school solely for our own pleasure. I am quite ready to admit that often my cousin, my pal, and I, in more or less serious moods of discussion, have said: 'Well, what's the use of planning a future; who knows whether we've got one?'

"The coming war—year after year another step nearer, every campaign such as Abyssinia, Spain, China and Japan; all of them signs of the times—all of them pointing in one direction, into the future that seemed to us very little of a future at all.

"Sometimes I wonder if it will be different this time—we say NOT now, but they said that the last time: Germany shall be crushed so never again she will be able to wage war—they said that too before: youth must have its say in the running of the country when it comes back from the battlefields; I guess they said that too, and maybe implemented it a little, but it didn't work. There is the opportunity for the Youth Clubs: fit youth of to-day for its tasks of citizenship to-morrow—by every means instil in them the knowledge of their Destiny, teach them what the Empire means, what England means, what they stand for. Broaden their outlook outside this island, in short; show them what they can do, and show them how to do it.

"I guess you know all this, though, or the Youth Movement would never have had its inception, and it's that and the other plans the Government are studying now for this and that, which makes me only say 'Sometimes I wonder . . .' I haven't really lost faith, for I feel deep down that it can and will be done. The finished product may not be perfect, but I think it will be a lot better. Really I shouldn't have said 'finished product' for obviously, unless you are going to do the impossible and conjure up a Utopia out of the blue, the ideal way of living will never become a finished product

—all we can hope for is to put things on the right road, educate youth to carry on, and add its own improvements, and in turn educate its own youth to do the same."

"Opinions on Sex Teaching"

"I am quite in agreement with you that the Bible has a message on all things. The ban on the reading of certain passages of it in schools, etc., is, of course, sheer stupidity. This is the result of past generations, who conceived the idea that if a subject was never alluded to, a child, in its ignorance, would be quite safe and happy. The contrary naturally happened, as it couldn't help but do with the natural inquisitiveness of the young mind, and so sex, which might have otherwise merely occupied no more place in a child's mind than his algebra, became an absorbing mystery, to be finally solved, or perhaps I should say partially solved, in queer ways, and probably with most grotesque answers!

"Without knowing really just how it could be done, I feel that sex education should form a part of the child's training, and not even be left until adolescence. America has, I believe, tried this, though I don't know just how. It seems that the system didn't work, and achieve the expected results, because from statistics I saw some time ago, it would appear that the education either didn't go far enough, or else went too far without going the whole way, judging by the confused answers some educationists received from students!

"Sex education, therefore, should, I think, be combined with an attempt to instil a full understanding of the respect—I use this term for want of a better word—which every young male should offer to his opposite number, and thus cause a general uplift in moral all-round character."

"Views on Religion."

"The religious background of a youngster's life must 'live' for him as an individual wherever he or she is. Comparisons must be made between things of to-day and those of many eras ago, to show how the principle is the same. Religious teaching is such that Christianity appears to the young, and to many elders too, I suspect, as a language of 'thee' and 'thou'; what was ordinary then is theatrical now, and consequently is placed on the same plane, as 'make-believe' as any costume play seen at a theatre.

"Because no one sees a helpless cripple 'take up his bed and walk,' there are, to many persons, no such things as miracles. And yet, are not hopeless cases cured to-day? Are not the dead brought back to life by electrical massage of the heart?

" Can it not therefore be represented that here is the parallel of those ancient times of which the Bible is a record? Why should it be written off as just another example of how clever we are growing? Rather, can't we say that Christ, once again, through the medium of the surgeon or physician, has performed a replica of the Biblical miracles?

" The other day some fellows here in camp started an argument on Heaven and Hell; were they two separate places? I reminded one of the boys that the Creed says, 'He descended into Hell, and on the third day He rose again and ascended into Heaven,' and put that as an argument for two places. I don't say that I implicitly believe it, for frankly I don't know quite *what* to think on that point. I mention it for out of the argument I tried to make the point that Christ came to earth as an example of man, and in His life went through what any man *could* go through—not what he *would* go through, because of the individual in him.

" Taking that as so, a man can go to Heaven or to Hell. And —and here is what could be important to the everyday mind—a man can do what Jesus did, he can raise the dead, he can heal the 'incurables'—therefore the Biblical times are still with us, but in such a different guise that it is not—in many cases—noticed.

Maybe I'm entirely wrong, but if it were correct, if it could be put to Club Members like that, I'm sure a great deal could be done. The young mind is imaginative but it doesn't imagine the reverse and translate old-world things into everyday; it goes one ahead and therefore Christianity is written off as archaic even though many, perhaps all, retain the nebulous idea that Christ *was* once on earth; there *is* a God but the one has gone and the other is an intangible Being who is a slight brake on one's inclinations towards evil.

" Get over to them the idea that Christ lives to-day in all because He was the representation of Man—in some potential, in some actual—in what they achieve. Let them start trying to find Jesus in what they know to-day (it can be done in so many ways); from there it is a short step to the belief that God is there all the time, watching, protecting, grieving at the wrong we do, smiling encouragement when we try to do right, approving when we succeed —for do not God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost make one? Where one is the other must be.

" Theologically, I may be a bit adrift, but I'm sure you'll see what I mean. Religion in the way they have to come to expect it will make no appeal to the youngsters, and will not recommend the Club to them, not so much because it's what they dislike but

just because it's something that is inclined to bore them for they can't believe in it.

"True religion in club life cannot become automatic. It has got to be represented in a different form from the present orthodox way."

"Music"

"One of the main points of your letter, I recall, was about music, and the three pending talks on the subject. My ideas of what I would like to hear are beautifully vague, I'm afraid, and not likely to be of much help! At least, when I say vague, *I know* what I would like, but whether I can express it satisfactorily is another matter—one of the main things, I think, would be an explanation of the descriptive powers of music, coupled with records to illustrate the points. Much of the meaning, and therefore the beauty, of a piece is lost if it is just so many sounds more or less pleasing to the ear. No one ever tried to educate me in this line, and it was ages before I really began to understand how music heard can bring to the mind's eye a picture of something in particular. I take it these talks are to be to members of your clubs with the average age of 16 or so, and you alone can tell whether there is any chance of getting it over to them. Supposing that it can be successfully explained to them, it will give them a chance of appreciating music much earlier in life than I ever did. It is only in the last few years that I have found any real pleasure in listening to anything but dance music (I freely admit!) and if it is any help to you in planning what you will do, I'll add, in a moment, a list of pieces that I am particularly fond of hearing. You say 'swing' is not barred from the talks, but I don't know that I would recommend it for the sort of talks I imagine these to be. It is such a controversial subject, with so many angles, that really it wants a series of talks all to itself! For instance, according to my opinion, anyway, swing is not jazz, jazz is not dance music, and yet dance music can be both!

"On the whole, and revoking in part my original opinion that it might be as well to leave the subject out, I think perhaps it would be as well to outline the fundamental differences, because there are very many people who will link the three forms of music together either as jazz, swing, or dance, with the result that when hearing representative tunes of each one comes to the conclusion that at least one brand must be entirely wrong!

"Now for the more serious pieces I most like to hear:—

Brahms *Cradle Song*,
On Wings of Song,

One Fine Day, from *Madame Butterfly*,
Ave Marie,
Schubert's *Serenade*,
Almost anything of Strauss,
Barcarole from *Tales of Hoffmann*,
Invitation to the Waltz,
Some portions of Chopin, such as that which gave rise to *So Deep is the Night*.

"These are only some pieces, but as representative as I can think of off-hand. It will probably show my musical education as sadly lacking, but at least it may demonstrate the horrors of what can happen if you don't educate your young people better! Apart from the above, I think a section of your talk might deal with folk music of different parts. Its music is, I believe, supposed to be a guide to the land of its origin and there may be much to learn in that direction."

"The Future?"

In answer to my letter on this topic

"Somehow, I shouldn't have thought you would have found it so surprising that we last-war-babies would feel it was going to happen again in the years that followed our 14th birthdays, or so. My cousin, our pal and I have discussed it many times in the pre-war years, sometimes pessimistically, sometimes optimistically, but either one way or another the shadow was always there. I really think I was more affected by it than the other two, for my cousin continued his planning for a career as a schoolmaster, whilst our pal trained for his future with night-classes, etc., in Colchester. I, on the other hand, did nothing of that sort. My activities, and my interest, too, for that matter, lay in the business I was engaged in, although the money factor, too, was against it. I never decided to go in for it to the extent of taking the Auctioneers' Institute exams. for the very reason that it seemed to be not worth while; seeing that I considered myself to be what the Insurance Companies would call 'a poor risk!' Consequently, I worked to the best of my abilities, and devoted the rest of my time to pursuits such as tennis, my amateur dramatic shows, and things like that. Gaining, it's true, a certain amount of benefit in self-confidence and so forth, in so doing.

"I think you will find in that 'shadow of war' complex the answer to the decadence you might feel infects the youth of to-day. To a certain extent I think we may be correct in saying that it is

decadent, but I can't help feeling that it is, to a great extent, only superficially so, and the rot hasn't got right down to the fundamentals. The country, and that includes the youth, too, has risen very well to the emergency of the war, and at least for such as myself, the uncertainty is over. Our shadow has materialised, and we have been whisked out of our days when the future was negligible and it seemed best to live for the pleasure of the moment. Now, we have a future—even if, privately, we may wonder whether we will live to see it—and it is going to make a big difference to those born like myself round about 1916–1918. If we survive this war, we can devote our energies—with the tragic example of the last 'war to end wars'—to trying to ensure that somehow such a state of things can never happen again. We have something to fight for now, and even if it isn't to be done with guns and planes, we shall still have something to fight for in the years to come, and in that I think you can find hopes that the decadence now evident can be erased—or at best, considerably diminished. I sometimes wonder if, with the advance of civilisation, and its effects on ways and standards of living, the deeds of ultimate decadence are not sown. I suppose it is inevitable that the easier it is to live the slacker one gets, which opens up the question that it's a moot point if we are entirely wise in our intentions of making this world such a marvellous place after the war, because of its ultimate effect on the generations to come! Trust me to raise a cockeyed side of the question such as that."

A Final Thought

"There is so much to Life that it seems a great pity not to know something of it before just living can tell you."

THE END

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Small Stage Properties : by Mrs. Nesfield Cookson ; pub. George Allen & Unwin. 4/6

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Health and Cleanliness Council, Aldwych House, Aldwych, London, W.C. 2.

R. W. Proffitt Ltd., 49–51, Knowslet Street, Bolton.

Films about Movement and Health : a pamphlet at 9d. from Central Council of Recreative Physical Tra ning, 58, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.

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Religious Films Ltd., Jasper Road, Norwood, S.E. 19.

MUSIC.

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Oxford Companion to Music : by Percy Scholes, Oxford University Press.

Percussion Band from A to Z : by M. Bavin ; Boosey & Hawkes.

Composers' Biographies ; Boosey & Hawkes. 1/6

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Both by the Oxford University Press.

RECORDS.

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Handbooks and pamphlets from :

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National Association of Girls' Clubs, Hamilton House, Bidborough Street, London, W.C. 1.

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Roads to Citizenship : Association for Education in Citizenship ; pub. Oxford University Press. 1/-

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